

By JAMES A. WOODBURN

The American Republic and Its Government

An Analysis of the Government of the United States, with a Consideration of its Fundamental Principles and of its Relations to the States and Territories. New Revised Edition. 8°.

Political Parties and Party Problems in the United States

A Sketch of American Party History and of the Development and Operations of Party Machinery, together with a Consideration of Certain Party Problems in their Relations to Political Morality.

Third Edition, revised and enlarged. 8°.

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AMERICAN POLITICS

POLITICAL PARTIES AND PARTY PROBLEMS IN THE UNITED STATES

A SKETCH OF AMERICAN PARTY HISTORY AND OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATIONS OF PARTY MACHINERY, TOGETHER WITH A CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN PARTY PROBLEMS IN THEIR RELATIONS TO POLITICAL MORALITY

BY

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THIRD EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

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INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD REVISED EDITION

THE first edition of this work was published more than twenty years ago, the second edition more than ten years ago. Within ten years and since that date there have been notable changes in party conditions and party problems in America. Fundamental principles and the essentials in political education have remained the same, as they will continue to do; but there have been important developments in party history, and new problems and issues in party government have presented themselves for the consideration of the citizen and of the student of politics. In the first edition of this volume notice was taken of the increased attention, within the years immediately preceding, to the study of politics in American schools and colleges. Academic and popular interest in this study has during recent years steadily increased and it may fairly be claimed that there never before were so many American citizens actively and intelligently engaged in the study of party problems as at the present time. The activity of women and the enlargement of their influence in politics with the advent of suffrage for women have been particularly notable. The claims of party, the working of party machinery, the conduct of our party life, and the men and women who are in party control,—these are subjects not only of the greatest importance but of wide-spread civic interest; and this is

an encouraging sign of the times. In a democracy, government leadership and control depend largely upon party leadership and control. The people will not be better governed than their parties are governed. Like parties, like government. If one has no knowledge or concern about the government of his party, if he be willing to let his party shift for itself and to fall into the control of a disreputable and unscrupulous class, he indicates that he is willing to let his government fall into the control of a similar class. If that is to be the spirit of our citizenship, the people will be constantly exploited and misgoverned. It has come to be understood that the actual forces in control of the American Government are the forces that manage the party, and that if Americans wish to govern themselves they must govern their political parties.

This increasing interest in politics and parties is manifest not only in our high schools and colleges but among all classes of American citizens. The rise of civic clubs and civic discussions among both men and women; the increased interest of the ministry and the church in politics, and the combined efforts of the churches toward christianizing the social order; the growth of Socialism and the consequent increase of popular interest in the Socialist program; labor movements, labor parties, labor demands, industrial difficulties, the non-partisan movements, the federation of farmers and agricultural needs; the problems presented by the dangers in the extreme concentration of wealth, and the growing demands for an industrial as well as a political democracy; the progressive spirit and issues of the times, together with the rising protests and insurgency among men of all parties against party mismanagement and abuses,—all these influences have

Introduction to the Revised Edition v

led to a nation-wide awakening and inquiry as to the methods of our party organizations as well as to a demand for a truer and more responsible representative government within our political parties. It is the aim of this book to promote political education by dealing with these and kindred subjects and to satisfy the spirit of inquiry concerning them.

In this revised volume I have attempted, for the use of the inquiring citizen and the young student of politics, an impartial and non-partisan presentation of the chief matters of concern in party government as affected by current questions and discussions. I have sought to avoid too much detail, the inclusion of too many miscellaneous topics, and to emphasize the matters of chief moment in permanent public interest. The sketch of party history is brought up to the present time and enlarged attention is given to the noteworthy period marked by the beginning of the Republican party. More careful and detailed consideration is given to the last ten years in our party conflicts in the hope of exciting and cultivating interest in current politics and current problems. It is hoped that the new volume may be the means of still further promoting a larger and more enlightened interest in education for citizenship, to the end that young voters and all classes of disinterested citizens may seek to know more not only of the underlying principles of our Democratic Republic, but also of the policies, the abuses, and remedies in the field of practical party politics.

J. A. W.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY,
BLOOMINGTON, IND.,
August 4, 1924.

PREFACE

THIS book, as indicated in its table of contents, has to do, not with forms of government and the duties and functions of public officers, but with the party spirit and forces that underlie and operate our Government. The book is a study of parties in America, —of party history, party machinery, party morality, party problems. Party has always been the agency by which America has been governed, and therefore party politics is pre-eminently a subject that demands the constant attention of intelligent and patriotic citizens. The book is published in the hope that it may aid in promoting, in school and home, the study of American Politics.

Politics is the science and art of government, the study of the state, its life, and its conduct. Whether looked to as a field of study or as a field of practical endeavor, Politics is a noble sphere of manly thought, energy, and enterprise. It has been said of History that while it is not a valuable study for the education of men it is invaluable for educated men. In keeping with this half-truth it may be thought that while Politics is a fit subject for the attention of mature and educated men, and while educated men are invaluable in political life, yet as a subject for the education of youth Politics may not be looked to with any assurance of profit. This view of political education, if it ever had any

serious hold on public thought, is rapidly disappearing. It is quite certain that the study of Politics in American schools and colleges has received a notable increase of attention within the last decade. Other educational agencies, the home, the press, the pulpit, the literary club, the civic federation, have all been emphasizing the need of civic training. All education by the State has the education of its citizenship for its primary purpose. While it is to be fully recognized that all subjects in the schools—the mathematics, the languages, science, history, literature—may be equally useful in producing an educated citizenship, and while all education has this largely for its aim, yet there is a widespread and natural public demand for the special study of those subjects that relate directly and especially to our political life. All educational agencies in America are recognizing this demand, and consequently the study of “Civics”—Politics is a better term—is being very widely cultivated and promoted. No effort that may still further promote this educational tendency can come amiss.

The true student of Politics will understand that the only firm foundation for his science rests on History. To study Politics in any serious sense is but to make a large use of History, to learn the lessons of experience for future guidance. With this thought in mind I have devoted fully half of my volume to a sketch of party history, in the attempt to reduce within a narrow compass, not what may be claimed as a history, but what may be offered merely as an outline sketch of American parties under the Constitution. The sketch may serve to introduce the reader to further inquiry and study, and this study will surely lead him to appreciate the truth for which the late Professor Seeley so ably

contended, that the chief purpose in the study of History is to study Politics, to study the life and progress of the state, the motives, means, and processes by which men have built and conducted their commonwealths. When we come to reflect on the political spirit of man, and the wonderful part it has played in the history of the world, especially in the Anglo-Saxon state, it will be conceded that no part of man's being is more worthy of attention and cultivation. It is a field which a great teacher, Thomas Arnold, has called the most important for the ripened human mind,—that one may become a factor in the greatest problem in human history, the problem of governing men. In all possible ways history should be used for political education and for the cultivation of the true political spirit that is so important in popular government. This relation of Politics to History it has been my aim to emphasize. In my sketch of party history I have sought also to have the reader appreciate more fully and more highly than is usually done certain positive and aggressive forces in third-party agitations that have effectually modified the course of national party history, that he may be led to see that party history, after all, is not entirely machine made.

The cultivation of the political spirit suggests another phase of Politics which I have sought to emphasize,—the political morality of the State. Education in Politics is not chiefly a question of knowledge: it is a question of character. As the wit and wisdom of Sidney Smith long since observed, “the only foundation of political liberty is the spirit of the people.” It is not forms of government, nor the machinery of parties, but civic character on which the state relies. As President Hadley has very well said, “Better the worst form of government with character and righteousness in the

rulers and the ruled than the best form of government with the rulers and the ruled indifferent to moral principles." Because of this close and vital relation of politics to ethics, and because of the direct dependence of national character on political conduct we may well conclude that De Tocqueville was right when he said that "politics is the end and aim of American education." If the life of the Republic depends upon the moral character of its citizenship all instruction should constantly, if not consciously, keep in view this aspect of political literature and education.

Horace Mann used to say that what America wishes to put into the life of the nation she must first put into her schools. But no saving force can go into the schools of a nation that does not first exist as a vital force in the nation's homes. In all periods of our history Politics should be *brought home* to the people; but the present, it seems to me, is a time when this demand should be made especially emphatic. Ordinary political issues may not call for discussion in school and home. But when the political rectitude of the people is brought into issue; when rich men are known to buy their way into high office; when it becomes an actual question whether a State shall surrender its virtue to outrage and its people to pillage; when unscrupulous men deliberately, openly, and unblushingly set about to corrupt the electorate of great commonwealths and yet are permitted to stand for the highest honors of their States,—at such times ordinary issues would seem to fade into insignificance and appeal should be made to the moral forces that constitute the foundations of our political society. In the face of such issues teachers, parents, and the moral pastors of the people should make Politics a matter of personal concern. There are many lines of

influence, of thought, and of activity, along which these forces may make themselves felt. The study of Politics is one of these, and this book is offered as a plea for the awakening of greater civic interest in parties and party government, and as an introduction to subjects that touch vitally the political life and character of the people.

J. A. W.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY,
BLOOMINGTON, IND.,
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POLITICAL PARTIES AND PARTY
PROBLEMS IN THE UNITED STATES

PART I

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF AMERICAN
POLITICAL PARTIES

CHAPTER I

POLITICAL PARTIES BEFORE THE CONSTITUTION

IN another volume we have considered the structure of the State and National governments, their legal framework, and the relation of these governments to one another. In this volume we shall consider the political forces by which these governments are operated. Ours is a government by party. The actual forces that operate the government, are party forces. In all forms of popular government, wherever men are striving to govern themselves and to realize government by the people, political parties exist. People divide according to their views on public measures. The only way we have yet found to carry on free government is by organized, drilled, and disciplined parties.¹ We must, therefore, study the origin and growth of political parties in America, their present constitution and machinery, and the methods by which this machinery is worked. "In America," says Mr. Bryce, "the government goes for less than in Europe, the parties count for more. The great moving forces are the parties."

Popular
Government
Is Govern-
ment by
Party

Party history in America may, for convenience, be

¹ See Bradford's *The Lesson of Popular Government*, vol. i., p. 493, on "The Spirit of Party."

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broadly divided into certain periods. In this chapter we shall deal with:

**Colonial
Parties** *The Colonial and Revolutionary Period.*—There were throughout this period no party organization and machinery as we understand those terms to-day. There were men of different views, and they may have been divided into bodies of conflicting opinion. Before the Revolution what party conflicts appear were between the royal governor, standing for royal prerogative and power, and the colonial assemblies, standing for the enlargement of colonial rights and liberties. In 1812, John Adams said that party division began in America with its first plantation, arising from human nature, and that in all the Colonies a court party and a country party had always contended.¹ In a general way party divisions in the Colonies corresponded to the party divisions in England. These were Whigs or Liberals, and Tories or Conservatives. At the opening of the Revolution the Whigs opposed the policy of King George and his Ministers, while the Tories supported it. The Americans were mostly Whigs. They had been dissenters at home, politically and religiously,—men who were inclined to resist governmental interference and authority and stand for their personal rights and liberties.

Samuel Johnson, in his *Taxation No Tyranny*, written in 1774, in opposition to the American Revolution, referred to the fact that there were not only three million men in America in resistance to government, but that there were *three million Whigs*. Lord Chatham, January 20, 1775, on a motion for withdrawing the troops from Boston, said in Parliament:

¹ *Works*, vol. x., p. 23.

“This resistance to your arbitrary system of taxation might have been foreseen. It was obvious from the nature of things, and of mankind; and, above all, from the *Whiggish* spirit flourishing in that country. The spirit which now resists your taxation in America is the same which formerly opposed loans, benevolences, and ship-money in England; the same spirit which called all England on its legs and by the Bill of Rights vindicated the English Constitution; the same spirit which established the great fundamental essential maxim of your liberties,—that no subject of England shall be taxed but by his own consent. This glorious spirit of *Whiggism* animates three millions in America who prefer poverty with liberty to gilded chains and sordid affluence; and who will die in defense of their rights as men and as freemen.”¹

The Whig
Spirit of the
American
Revolution

These colonial Whigs and Tories corresponded in opinion and character to the English parties of the same name. It may be profitable to understand the origin and the underlying characteristics of these English parties.

Macaulay attributes the first appearance of modern parties in English history to the time when the English Parliament had under consideration their Grand Remonstrance to Charles I., in 1641. During the previous troublous years under the Stuarts, the Parliamentarians, who were contending for the rights of Englishmen under the law in opposition to royal prerogative, acted as a united body. When the Long Parliament finally assembled, their popular leaders struck down abuse after abuse without a struggle. The abolition of the Star Chamber and the High Commission Court,

The Origin
of Modern
English
Parties

¹ Goodrich, *British Eloquence*, p. 130.

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the Triennial Act requiring frequent Parliaments, the impeachment of Laud, and the attainder of Strafford occasioned no serious divisions in the Commons.

"But," says Macaulay, "when in October, 1641, the Parliament reassembled after a short recess, two hostile parties, essentially the same with those which, under different names, have ever since contended, and are still contending, for the direction of public affairs, appeared confronting each other. During some years they were designated as 'Cavaliers,' and 'Roundheads.' They were subsequently called 'Whigs' and 'Tories.' One of these represents a party zealous for authority and antiquity, the other was zealous for liberty and progress. . . . Everywhere there is a class of men who cling with fondness to whatever is ancient, and who, even when convinced by overpowering reasons that innovation would be beneficial, consent to it with many misgivings and forebodings. We find also everywhere another class of men, sanguine in hope, bold in speculation, always pressing forward, quick to discern the imperfections of whatever exists, disposed to think lightly of the risks of change, and disposed to give every change credit for being an improvement."¹

On this general ground of the difference between conservatism and radicalism, Mr. Macaulay bases the origin and distinction of English parties.

Conservatism vs. Radicalism	It was in 1679, during the agitation on the Exclusion Bill, that the terms "Whig" and "Tory" were first applied to these parties. Those who were beseeching the king, Charles II., again to summon the dissolved Parliament in order that they might compass the exclusion of a Catholic prince from the throne, were called "Petitioners." Those who expressed abhorrence at such an attempt to restrict the king's
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¹ Macaulay, *History of England*, vol. i.

prerogative were called "Abhorrrers." These soon became known as Whigs and Tories. The nickname "Whig," according to Macaulay, was first given in reproach to the Presbyterian zealots of Scotland, who, driven mad by persecution, were in outlawry against the forces of the king. The term was soon transferred to those English politicians who showed a disposition to oppose the court and to treat Protestant Non-conformists with indulgence. Accord- "Whig" and ing to the same authority, the term "Tory" "Tory" was first applied to the Catholic outlaws in the bogs of Ireland, and was soon transferred to those Englishmen who refused to concur in excluding a Roman Catholic prince from the throne. Lecky says that the "Tory" was originally an Irish robber and that the term was afterwards extended to the opposers of exclusion; and the term "Whig" began when the Cameronians took up arms for their religion, and was derived from the whey, or refuse milk, which their poverty obliged them to use.¹

We may think of the Tory, then, as a supporter of the English Church and the prerogatives of the English Crown. Those who were for tolerance toward Non-conformists were naturally Whigs. The Tories were for the country aristocracy, the landed gentry, and were jealous of new men, of the growing commercial classes, of the commonalty. The Whigs stood for these latter classes.

The difference indicated by Macaulay between the Whig and the Tory—the difference between the radical

¹ Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*. According to another version, *Whig* was derived from "Whiggam," a word employed by Scotch cattle-drovers in the west in driving their horses.

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and the conservative—is supported by Hallam. In a notable passage Hallam says:

“They differed in this: The Tory looked to the Constitution as an ultimate document from which he could not swerve and which it was political heresy to think of changing. The Whig regarded the public welfare the highest law and stood ready for any change in the Constitution or for any form of government by which the public welfare would clearly be promoted. The Whig had a natural tendency to improvement, the Tory an aversion to it. The Whig loved to descant on liberty and the love of mankind; the Tory on the mischiefs of sedition and the rights of kings. The Whig made the privileges of the subject, the Tory the privileges of the Crown, his peculiar care. The Tory might aid in establishing despotism, the Whig in subverting monarchy. The Tory was generally hostile to the liberty of the Press, to freedom of inquiry, to freedom of religion; the Whig was their friend. The principle of the Whig was amelioration; of the Tory, conservation. The Whigs appear to have taken a far more comprehensive view of the nature and ends of civil society; their principle is more virtuous, more flexible to the variations of time and circumstance, more congenial to masculine intellects. The parties bear some analogy to the two forces which retain the planetary bodies in their orbits,—the annihilation of one would disperse them into chaos, that of the other would drag them to a consuming centre.”¹

It will be seen from this description why the American colonists were mostly Whigs. While the analogy between the English and the American parties cannot be traced throughout our national history, it may be well to keep in mind this general distinction between the

¹ *Constitutional History of England*

radical and the conservative, and to observe how the distinction between the Whig and the Tory colored the politics of the Colonies and of the Revolution. The ruling class in the Colonies, their governors and others sent out by royal appointment to govern the colonists, and those with large landed interests, were, as a rule, Tories; but the masses of the common people, the small home-owners and the actual tillers of the soil, the immigrants who were driven by hardships to find new homes in the new world, the Puritan and Quaker English, the Irish, the Scotch, and the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, "poor, vagrant, and adventurous immigrants," as Mr. Lecky calls them,¹ were mostly Whigs, so far as they can be politically classified.

Constitu-
ency of the
Colonial
Parties

During the Revolution the parties were called Patriots and Tories, or Whigs and Loyalists. The Loyalists, or Tories, opposed the Revolution, and in many cases they fought on the side of Great Britain.

Parties
of the
Revolution

They numbered probably one third of the population.² The Loyalists were as a rule, the men of property and rank who had most to lose by upheaval and innovation, the men of culture and education who rather despised the Whigs. Washington was one of the few officers of the American Army who was regarded by the Tories as a gentleman by birth, while the Continental Congress was continually derided as a body of "bankrupt shopkeepers" and "word-spouting cobblers and tinkers," who found "mending the State a more lucrative job than mending kettles and patching shoes."³

¹ *American Revolution*, p. 224.

² John Adams's *Works*, vol. x., p. 87.

³ *The Outlook*, March 3, 1900, article on "What Social Democracy Means."

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After the Revolution and the complete triumph of the Whigs, or Patriots, nothing of the Tory party remained in America. Those of its members who had not gone to Halifax or to other English settlements accepted the results of the war; and among the most important of these results was the dominance of republican popular government in America. All the people were now Whigs. Strictly speaking, the people in this period were without parties, but were ready to divide into opposing parties when a divisive issue arose.

In the Constitutional Convention of 1787 we observe this new party division. With the division in this Convention begins the real history of parties in the United States. There were many points of difference and conflicting opinion in the Convention; but the one which was most constant, which ran through a large

part of the debates, was the difference between the *Large State* party and the *Small State* party, between

those who wished to form a *National* government and those who wished to retain a purely *Confederate* government. The National party, composed mostly of the representatives from the large States, led by Madison of Virginia, Wilson of Pennsylvania, and King of Massachusetts, wished to form

a government in which representation according to population should be provided for in both Houses of Congress, in which the controlling power should be vested in the National Government. Their opponents wished the supreme power left with the States. The States' rights, or Federal, party believed that the Government should be a confederation of States, that

**Tories
Disappear
in America**

**Parties in
the Consti-
tutional
Convention**

**Large States
vs. Small
States, the
National
vs. the
Confederate
Principle**

the States should be the source of all power, that the Central Government was to be looked to as merely a convenience for certain general concerns. These conflicting opinions on Nationalism and Federalism determined a member's position on many of the questions before the Convention. The Nationalists favored, while the Federalists opposed,

(a) Proportional representation,

(b) Popular election of national officers,

(c) The subordination of the States to the nation, and the vesting of large powers in the central Federal authority.

The fundamental difference was whether political power should be drawn from the States as such, or from the people directly. Thus the question of proportional representation, whether power should be exercised in proportion to numbers, struck at the root of the difference. If the National party had its way power would then rest, not upon the States as such, but upon the people of the States in proportion to their numbers.

The other party, composed chiefly of the delegates from the small States, led by Martin of Maryland, Paterson of New Jersey, Ellsworth and Johnson of Connecticut, wished to have a government which would provide for equal State representation in both Houses of Congress, without reference to population.

This idea involved a purely confederate government, resting upon the States, drawing its powers and resources from the States. There were moderate men from the small States who "were friends to a good National Government," but, as one of them said, they "would sooner submit to a foreign power than submit to be deprived of an equality of suffrage in both branches

The
Confederate
or Small
State Party

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of the legislature.”¹ These men, as we know, forced a compromise, so that the Convention formed neither a purely national nor a purely federal government. The terms that would most nearly describe the parties of the Convention would be *National* and *Federal*, for on other questions throughout the debates of the Convention the same difference is to be observed as is seen on this main question of equal or proportional representation,—one party generally favoring, the other opposing the grant of power to the proposed new Federal Government. When the Constitution was adopted by the Convention and submitted to the States for ratification or rejection, while it was not entirely satisfactory to the *Large State*, or *National*, party, it was more satisfactory to them than to their opponents, and they became the friends and advocates of the Constitution before the people of the States. They took the name of *Federalist*, since they favored union under the new *Federal* Constitution, as it was then called. Their opponents, though they claimed to be true Federalists, were forced to take the name of *Anti-Federalist*, a term which is to be understood as describing those who opposed the adoption by the States of the new Constitution. Strictly, the *Federalist* party might have been called *National*, and the *Anti-Federalist* party might have been called *Federalist*, as these terms more nearly describe the ideas for which the respective parties stood. But as the Anti-Federalists were merely in opposition to the proposal then before the people, they are known merely as an *anti-party*.

As the questions raised and discussed in the Convention were settled by the adoption of the Constitution,

¹ Dickinson, Madison's *Journal*, p. 163.

these parties, or bodies of opinion, were too short-lived to be called parties properly. *Party* carries with it the idea of continued activity over a considerable period. We should notice, then, that these two parties represent merely two tendencies, the centrifugal and the centripetal. The Anti-Federal party stood for the desire to maintain the freedom of the individual citizen and the independence of the several States. The members of this party thought that the Federal Government, with large central powers, was too strongly national and would endanger State interests and powers. The Federal party, on the other hand, stood for the opposite tendency, the increase of central power. Besides the extreme States' rights men like Lee, Henry, Clinton, and Lowndes, the Anti-Federalists were made up of those who had favored paper-money in the States, who believed in leniency, if not discrimination, in favor of debtors, and of those who believed their ambition and interests could best be gratified in the smaller arena of State affairs. The Anti-Federalists would have succeeded in preventing the adoption of the Constitution if it had not been agreed that certain amendments should be added,—a "bill of rights" guaranteeing on the part of the new Central Government, as the States had already guaranteed, the muniments of civil liberty to the citizen, and expressly reserving to the States all powers not delegated to the Central Government.

CHAPTER II

THE HAMILTONIAN FEDERALISTS AND THE JEFFERSONIAN REPUBLICANS, 1789-1800

AFTER the Constitution was adopted and Washington became President, the conflicting tendencies observed in the struggles over the adoption of the Constitution reappeared. The parties under Washington are to be known as the Federalist **Federalist** vs. **Democratic-Republican** and the Republican. Sometimes the latter were called by their opponents, in derision and reproach, *Democrats*, and the hyphenated word *Democratic-Republican* was also used to designate them. It is often supposed that these parties are identical in principle and purpose with the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists of a few years before. This is an error. To be a Federalist in 1787 and 1788 was to favor the adoption of the Constitution. To be a States' rights Anti-Federalist was to oppose that. Madison was a National-Federalist with Hamilton then. But to be a Federalist in 1791 was to favor the adoption of Hamilton's financial measures and a broad construction of the Constitution. On these issues Madison ceased to be a Federalist with Hamilton and became a Republican under Jefferson. Both Jefferson and Madison, the originators and organizers of the Republican party, favored the adoption of the Consti-

tution. That is, they were Federalists in 1787. But they opposed Hamilton's financial measures and broad construction of the Constitution and joined issue with the Federalists on other measures proposed under the leadership of Hamilton. On the other hand, some of the Anti-Federalists, like Patrick Henry, who had opposed the adoption of the Constitution, gave their adherence to Hamilton and his policy. Yet the major part of the old Anti-Federalists gave their support to the Jeffersonian Republicans, and the great body of the Federalists who did battle for the Constitution continued to be Federalists under Washington and Hamilton. In its underlying principles the Anti-Federalist party was the forerunner of the Jeffersonian Republicans.

The main issues separating these two parties from 1790 to 1801 were as follows:

1. Hamilton's financial measures.—Hamilton's funding scheme, by which no discrimination was to be made between the holders of government securities, but by which all classes were to be paid in full whether speculators who had bought at great discount or original holders who had held at great sacrifice; the assumption of the State debts by the National Government; the scheme of the First United States Bank; the excise, and the vigorous exercise of the national authority in its collection, as also the suppression of the "Whiskey Rebellion,"—all these measures the Hamiltonian Federalists favored while the Jeffersonian Republicans opposed them.

Issues
between the
Federalists
and
Republicans
1. Hamilton's
Financial
Measures

2. Questions of foreign policy:

(a) The war between France and England. The Federalists were the friends of England, the Republicans,

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of France. The Federalists, as the party of law and order and of established government, were shocked at the outrages and excesses of the "Reign of Terror" in France, and they thought it most important to restrain the democratic excesses promoted by the French Revolution. They therefore counselled neutrality in the war which France had declared against Great Britain. The Republicans, as the party of liberty and the rights of man, looked with more leniency upon the French excesses as necessary accompaniments of a struggle of a people to be free. Jefferson thought a little revolution or resistance now and then was a good thing, to keep governments in order and to remind them of the rights of the governed. Party spirit ran high on this Franco-English war, so much so that one party, the Federalists, was called the English party, while the Republicans were called the French party. A Spanish traveler remarked that there were to be found in America many Englishmen and many Frenchmen but, unfortunately, there were no Americans. The Republicans organized secret democratic clubs in the cities, modeled after the Jacobin Clubs of France, and if they could have had their way we should have been embroiled in a war with England. On the other hand, the Federalists, led by Hamilton, were ready to have us break our French alliance of 1778 in such a way as would have led to a breach with France. Washington held to a moderate and fair course and issued his proclamation of neutrality, a policy which was favored by both Hamilton and Jefferson, though from different inclinations and motives.

(b) This difference of attitude toward France and

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Great Britain led to a party issue over Jay's Treaty. The Federalists favored the treaty, as it enabled us to maintain a friendly relation with Great Britain, while the Republicans opposed it because, as they thought, it sacrificed our interests and did not maintain a proper spirit of independence toward England.

b. Jay's
Treaty as
an Issue

3. The Federalists favored, while the Republicans resisted, the increase of governmental authority by the nation. The Republicans opposed the increase of executive authority at the expense of legislative control, as well as the increase of national authority at the expense of State control. Their desire was to keep power close to the people, and they therefore insisted upon a Federal system in which the greater power should rest with the States; and in the exercise of central authority power should lie rather with the representatives of the people in Congress than with the President, who stood for the monarchical element in the State.

3. National
and
Executive
Authority vs.
State and
Congress-
sional
Authority

This is seen in the contest over the Jay Treaty. The Republicans believed that Hamilton sought to incorporate in a treaty provisions as to the regulations of commerce (a subject committed by the Constitution to both branches of Congress) that he knew would not be enacted into law by the popular branch of the National Legislature. He, therefore, took a more convenient method of securing this legislation—merely by the coöperation of the President and Senate. The Republicans insisted on the right of the popular branch of Congress to prevent this exercise of power on matters committed to the representatives of all the people.

The Republicans insisted that the interests of the

people would be better cared for and republican government better promoted by retaining power within the States and the subdivisions of the States. They therefore urged the importance of local self-government as against the increase of national powers and functions. Jefferson asserted that he would preserve both the General and State governments in their constitutional form and equilibrium; he would observe sharply the line between them, but in doing so he would draw that line so as to limit the powers of the Nation while enlarging the functions of the State. "Encroachments," he said, "are more to be feared from the General Government. Encroachments from the State governments will tend to an excess of liberty which will correct itself; while those from the General Government will tend to monarchy which will fortify itself from day to day instead of working its own cure, as all experience shows."¹ Later, writing upon the importance of local self-government and the issue of States' rights as against national power Jefferson said:

"Were not this great country already divided into States, that division must be made that each might do for itself what concerns itself directly, and what it can so much better do than a distant authority. Every State again is divided into counties, each to take care of what lies within its local bounds; each county again into townships, or wards, to manage minuter details; and every ward into farms, to be governed each by its individual proprietor. Were we directed from Washington when to sow and when to reap we should soon want bread."²

4. From what has been said it will be seen that

¹ Jefferson to Stuart, December 23, 1791. Randall's *Jefferson*, vol. ii., p. 23.

² Jefferson's *Autobiography*, vol. i., p. 68, Ford's edition.

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underlying these differences on practical policies and measures proposed by Hamilton and the Federalists, or growing out of them, were differences of view as to the construction of the Constitution. Both parties under Washington accepted and professed to venerate the Constitution. Both appealed to the Constitution for support. The difference between them was a difference of construction. The Federalists favored a construction of the Constitution which allowed large power to the Federal Government, while the Republicans favored a construction which tended to restrict that power. The Federalists were broad and liberal—the Republicans called them loose—in construing the powers conferred upon the Federal Government. The Republicans were strict—the Federalists called them narrow—in construing the national powers. Many Republicans, in fact, were so strict, Jefferson among them, that they would have reduced the Federal Government to a department for foreign affairs.

4. The Interpretation of the Constitution

This difference between the parties in the construction of the Constitution is to be seen in the Federalist legislation of 1798, the Alien and Sedition Acts, and in the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of the Republicans, by which these measures were opposed. In resisting these Federalist measures Jefferson and Madison in their resolutions fell back upon a strict construction of the Constitution, denying that the Federal Government could be the judge of the extent of its own powers, and denying that it had a right to punish any crimes other than those specifically mentioned in the Constitution.

The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions

In addition to setting forth an important constitu-

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tional doctrine, these resolutions were designed to direct attention to the assumptions of national power and to the alarming nature of Federalist legislation. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions were, in one sense, the first party platform ever published in America, and they were prepared by Madison and Jefferson, the leaders of the Republican party, as a constitutional defense of the State and the citizen. "The friendless alien had, indeed, been selected as the safest subject of a first experiment, but the citizen will soon follow as the prey and victim of governmental power."¹ Such was Jefferson's representation of the purpose of the Federalists.

5. These differences on policies and constitutional construction indicate a still more fundamental difference between the parties, a difference based on the character of men and their attitude toward the functions of government and the nature of the State. The difference is between those who are the advocates of power for the defense of order, the preservation of the rights of property, and the promotion of enterprises, and those, on the other hand, who are devotees of liberty in resistance to tyranny and governmental interference. Jefferson declared that the Alien and Sedition Acts and other acts of those in power had a tendency to drive the people of the States into revolution and blood, and that they would thus furnish

5. Differences as to the Functions and Sphere of Government

"new calumnies against republican government and new pretexts for those who wish it to be believed that man

¹ Kentucky Resolutions, art. ix. See p. 75 in the author's *The American Republic and Its Government*, for the constitutional doctrine set forth in these Resolutions.

cannot be governed but by a rod of iron; that it would be a dangerous delusion if a confidence in the men of our choice were to silence our fears for the safety of our rights; that confidence is everywhere the parent of despotism; free government is founded in jealousy and not in confidence; it is jealousy and not confidence which prescribes limited constitutions to bind down those whom we are obliged to trust with power."¹

Here Jefferson expresses very clearly the difference between the early parties in their attitude toward government. One looked with favor and confidence on the increase and exercise of governmental powers; the other regarded government with jealousy and would as much as possible limit its authority in restraint of the people. One party were the advocates of power, the other the lovers of freedom. Jefferson and his party were democratic and they wished their government and its agents to be kept in close touch with the people and easily controlled by the people. This accounts, in part, for their opposition to Hamilton's financial policy. They knew that policy was designed to strengthen the Federal Government over which the people had remote control, and to weaken the State Government over which the people had direct control, and that Hamilton's policy would foster a moneyed aristocracy and make the moneyed class a permanent ally of the National Government. As true democrats the Jeffersonian Republicans opposed this. They wished to revive and advance the republican spirit that had produced the American and French Revolutions, to oppose class rule and class privilege, and to make the Government a government of the people.

¹ Kentucky Resolutions, 1798, art. ix.

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It has been said that Hamilton, contending for power, would make the Union great and glorious, and that Jefferson, contending for liberty, would make every citizen strong and free.¹ To accomplish his great purpose, Jefferson would provide a school of politics for every citizen in local self-government, in the discussion and control of public affairs in township and school district.

In these two differences,—in constitutional construction and in the differing attitudes of the two parties toward government and liberty,—writers have found the “continuing basis of division” between the two great historic parties in America. One party, known by its several names, Federalist, Whig, Republican, has favored broad construction,* the growth of national power, increasing functions of government, the larger exercise of force and authority in restraint of social disorders. The other party, under its various names, Anti-Federalist, Democratic-Republican, Democratic, has held to strict construction, the rights of the States, the largest degree of individual and social liberty, without annoyances from government. The one of these parties has been called the *party of political measures*, the other the *party of political principles*. The one, the Federalist-Whig-Republican, were the advocates of governmental schemes and projects, the financial plans of Hamilton, the excise, the Alien and Sedition Acts, the protective policy, internal improvements, Congressional restraint of slavery, energetic measures in prosecution of the Civil War, and

¹ See a suggestive article by Professor A. D. Morse on “The Significance of the Democratic Party,” in the *International Monthly* for October, 1900.

Congressional Reconstruction. The other party, from its principles of attachment to individual liberty and constitutional restraint on government, has usually opposed these measures in the purpose of preventing government from attempting too many things on behalf of the people and for the purpose of preventing objectionable measures urged on behalf of special and powerful interests.

While it is generally true that the Federalists, Whigs, and Republicans have been the advocates of broad construction, of the exercise of authority, and the increase of national power, the generalization will not uniformly hold. There have been times when the reverse has been the case. While the Federalists generally favored a liberal construction of the Constitution as favorable to the enlargement of national power, yet, while out of power, under Jefferson and Madison, prompted by their local interests, they resisted the Executive and Congress, and urged, under the States' rights compact view of the Constitution, that the acts of the administration were unconstitutional.

Parties out
of Power
Tend toward
Strict
Construc-
tion

On the other hand, the Democratic-Republicans, when they came into power under Jefferson, began to stretch the Constitution to cover the exercise of powers which they had previously denied. They did this to such an extent that they nationalized their own party and effectually killed the Federalist party as a party of opposition. Marshall said that Jefferson killed the Federalist party by adopting its principles. Thus it is, party experience has gone to show, that in large measure the *ins* have been inclined to broad construction and the enlargement of national authority, and the *outs* to strict construction and the restriction of

that authority. Each party has, in its turn, fallen back upon the rights and powers of the States to preserve its interests from the political measures of its opponents while these were in control of the national administration. In the purchase of Louisiana, Jefferson attempted to preserve his consistency by acknowledging that the purchase was unconstitutional on the theory of strict construction, but he claimed that, like a guardian for a ward, he was justified in making the purchase in contravention of the Constitution with the expectation of having his action endorsed by a subsequent amendment. But, rejecting this view, the Republican leaders in Congress accommodated themselves to a constitutional doctrine more liberal than they were disposed to assert while they were out of power,—a doctrine that enabled them to vote for the purchase of Louisiana as constitutional. On the other hand, the Federalists, now in opposition, resisted this purchase as unconstitutional. Josiah Quincy, a Federalist leader, resisted the admission of Louisiana in 1811 as a violation of the “compact” between the States such as would justify secession and revolution; the admission of Louisiana, he said, would be the dissolution of the Union, and it would be the right and duty of the States to prepare for separation, “amicably if they can, forcibly if they must.”¹ The Federalists also resisted as unconstitutional the Non-Importation and Embargo Acts, in 1807 and 1809, and they carried their factious opposition to the War of 1812 almost to the verge of secession in 1814.

Again, between 1850 and 1860, when the States’ rights Democracy of the South, being in power, called

¹ Speech of Josiah Quincy, Johnston and Woodburn’s *American Orations*, vol. i., p. 182.

into exercise the power of the National Government within the States for the recovery of fugitive slaves, the Republican leaders like Sumner and Wade fell back on the reserved rights of the States, and the compact principle in the Constitution, in resistance to this exercise of national authority. Wade and Sumner did not deny, as Quincy did, that the Constitution was a national instrument, but they insisted that the fugitive slave clause was a "compact" clause, not a power-conferring clause, and they asserted that its enforcement was a matter of inter-State right and comity.¹ It will be seen that the general statements to which we have referred as to the permanent and continuing differences between parties, cannot be accepted without qualification.

Coming again to the Hamiltonian Federalists and the Jeffersonian Republicans, we are aided in understanding the differences between these parties by noticing what they thought of one another. The Federalists, regarding themselves as the champions of order and the upholders of law, looked upon Jefferson and the Republicans as anarchists and repudiators; as the enemies of property, of society, and of vested rights. The Federalists were afraid of social upheaval and convulsion. It was for this reason that they looked to the Constitution as a means of promoting a strong and energetic government for the defense of the rights of property. In Federalists' eyes democracy was the bane of the country, and the radical, French, democratic views of Jefferson seemed altogether revolutionary, and, consequently, the Federalists were brought more and more

What the
Early Parties
Thought of
One Another

¹ See the speeches of Wade, 1854, of Sumner on the Fugitive Slave Law, 1852, and the case of Ableman *vs.* Booth.

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to believe in the need of stringent measures. "Fears of French Jacobinism almost created a panic among the staid New England Federalists. Frenzied mobs, universal license, atheism, communism,—these bogies terrified the conservative, easy-going Puritans as if all they held dear were to be engulfed."¹ Marshall, speaking for the moderate Federalists,² said that that party desired no stronger government than the Constitution allowed, or than was necessary to security; that Hamilton's treasury schemes were sound and salutary, and that Republican opposition to them originated in a desire to avoid the payment of the public debt, in a dislike of the restraints indispensable to good order, and in the narrow and unprincipled ambition of local demagogues, and in a desire for the "loaves and fishes" of political power; that the Federalists were but a moderate and truly republican party, and the "representations of their opponents to the contrary were but pretenses fabricated by demagogues or mad enthusiasts and addressed to the passions and prejudices of ignorant mobs."³

On the other hand, the Republicans, regarding themselves as the friends of liberty and the rights of man, looked upon the Federalists as "monarchists" who were ready to subvert the Constitution and "administration" the government into whatever they wished to make it. The contest, according to Jefferson, was between the advocates of republicanism and the advocates of kingly government. According to the Republicans, the Federalists wished to revive royalty and nobility by assuming high-sounding titles, by observing stately and dignified ceremonies, by setting

¹ H. C. Lodge's *Life of George Cabot*.

² *Life of Washington*.

³ Randall's *Life of Jefferson*, vol. ii., pp. 37-39.

up a splendid government, and thus, by parade and splendid pageantry, after the manner of kings, they would dazzle, or "razzle-dazzle," the people, and a ruling class would be recognized such as England had always maintained. All this meant social ranks and special privileges established by law, paraphernalia of office, official levees, large civil and military establishments, navies, armies, extravagance, and burdensome taxes. The result would be the oppression of the people. A privileged few would continue to lord it over the masses of their fellow-men. Against all these things Jefferson set his face. His party, therefore, opposed the extension, or perpetuation, of a public debt; they opposed large expenditures of the public money; a large army or a large navy; the exercise of governmental functions for private interests or enterprises; and, looking upon the Judiciary as being far removed from popular control and as inimical to popular interests, they opposed life tenures for judicial offices. To the Jeffersonian Republicans "government by injunction" would have been a terror. Jefferson, having witnessed great evils under a despotic government, and having an optimistic confidence in the masses of men, believed that the people would take care of themselves without governmental interference. Hamilton, in the more pessimistic faith that men were to be governed only by force or by appeals to their material interests, believed that agencies of government should be multiplied and strengthened to keep men in order.

Of the constituencies of these two parties, Mr. Bryce says:

"The small farmers and Southern men generally followed the Republican standard, following the lead of Virginia.

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while the strength of the Federalists lay in New England and the Middle States, led sometimes by Massachusetts, sometimes by Pennsylvania. The commercial interests were with the Federalists and the staid solid Puritanism of all classes, headed by the clergy. Some one has described the struggle from 1796 to 1808 as one between Jefferson, an avowed free-thinker, and the New England ministers. The revolt of New England Puritanism against the supposed atheism of the French Revolution, and the desire of the New England shippers and merchants for a Central Government strong enough to make and enforce treaties with other commercial countries, the desire for a uniform currency and a strong government able to command order and enforce law,—these were the forces behind and in support of the Federalists. . . . Jefferson's importance lies in the fact that he became the representative not merely of democracy, but of local democracy; of the notion that government is hardly wanted at all, that the people are sure to go right if they are left alone; that he who resists authority is *prima facie* justified in doing so because authority is *prima facie* tyrannical; that a country where each local body in its own local area looks after the objects of common concern, raising and administering such funds as are needed, and is interfered with as little as possible by any external power, comes nearest to the ideal of a truly free people.”¹

A distinction has been drawn between Jefferson's national democracy and his States' rights Jefferson's National Democracy and his States' Rights Republicanism. Jefferson was both a States' rights Republican and a National Democrat, but his national democracy was the stronger force of the two. As a Southern Republican he represented republicanism as opposed to monarchy; as a National Democrat

¹ Bryce, *American Commonwealth*, vol. ii., p. 9.

he represented republicanism as opposed to oligarchy.

He was not a Social Democrat, and was called one merely as a term of reproach and opprobrium. His Northern followers were mostly Democrats, the levellers of rank and the advocates of equal opportunities.¹ Political democracy was Jefferson's great desire, that government should be of, by, and for the people; that there should be equal rights for all and special privileges for none. This was the *end* he had in view. Retaining large rights and powers to the States was the *means* he would employ. When, therefore, the National Government was democratized, after it was saved from kingcraft by the people's entrusting power to the Jeffersonian democracy; when it was seen that the National Government could be used as an instrument to promote great popular interests under the management of popular representative leaders, it was inevitable that national powers should increase at the expense of the rights of the States. This was what occurred in Jefferson's administration. Jefferson himself promoted this movement, urged by forces within his party. Many small farmers at the North, and many recent immigrants and middle-class tradesmen, were not wedded to Jefferson's Kentucky views as to the rights of the States and the limitations on national powers but they were Democrats who believed in manhood suffrage and in equal opportunities for all, and they supported Jefferson as the champion of national democracy. Under Jefferson's leadership, this democratic element at the North was brought into alliance with the aristocratic planters of the South, the true States' rights Republicans, like John Randolph, of Roanoke, and other slave masters who despised the free common

¹ See Adams's *History of the United States*, vol. i., pp. 162 and 209.

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laborer as a "mudsill." That choppers and fishermen should constitute the state was very far from the thought of the blue-blooded aristocrats of Virginia and the Carolinas. But Jefferson's doctrines promoted democracy, and he looked to States' rights and local self-government as a means of promoting the democratic cause. When the cause of national democracy came in conflict with the reserved powers of the States, Jefferson's exercise of national powers for the promotion of popular interests proved his national democracy to be stronger than his States' rights republicanism.

The fall of the Federalists, in 1800, marks a revolution in party history. The Republican masses led by Jefferson overcame the ruling classes led by Hamilton and Adams. The result came about from various causes:

Causes of
the Fall of
the Federal-
ists, 1800

1. The dissensions and jealousies within the Federalist party.—Hamilton and Adams had become irreconcilable, and Hamilton attacked his official party chief in an indiscreet and abusive political pamphlet. Most of the distinguished men of the nation were within the ranks of the Federalists. The party's strength lay, not in its popular following, but in the ability of its leaders. Hamilton was a leader of leaders, but he was not a leader of the people; and John Adams, a first-rate man, when elected to the official leadership of the party would not take a second place within his own administration beside any man. Adams could not brook Hamilton's imperious dictation. When these feuds broke out among the Federalist leaders the party fell to rise no more.

2. Certain measures of Adams's administration alienated support.—The act imposing duties on stamped paper and vellum, the naturalization act, increasing

the time required for naturalization from five years to fourteen; the alien and sedition acts; a bill increasing the army and navy; certain excise taxes,—these measures Jefferson used effectually to rally support to the opposition.

3. Adams's personal unpopularity repelled many supporters. He was cold in temper, suspicious in nature, and had an excessive sense of his own official dignity and importance. His lack of tact and of the politician's art contributed to his defeat.

4. On the other hand, Jefferson was a master of tactful political leadership, and his organizing power, by which he brought together into one party the democratic element of the country, both local and national, was one of the important factors in the triumph of his party in 1800.

5. The country was, in its spirit and constituency, essentially democratic. There was an intense feeling of opposition to royalty, kingly forms, and class government. Jefferson played cleverly and effectually upon these feelings and prejudices. The revolutions in America and France had aroused a strong democratic impulse throughout Europe and America. This was especially strong among the recent immigrants and the middle-class Americans. Consequently, the "mercantile and manufacturing classes, with all the advantage of their wealth and intelligence and habit of coöperation, were yet vanquished by the agricultural masses."¹

When the Republican party came into power, in 1801, their great leader, who, take him all in all, was the most influential and most masterful personal factor that has ever appeared in American politics, published

¹ Bryce, vol. ii.

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in his first inaugural address a state paper which ranks second only to the Declaration of Independence. This address sums up more than any other state paper the permanent platform of Jefferson's historic party. It became a standard by which "all future political movements were to be measured, and it went out of fashion only when its principles were universally accepted or thrown aside."¹ In this historic address, Jefferson attempted to compress the principles of his party within the narrowest possible compass:

“Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling
Principles of alliances with none; the support of the State
Jeffersonian governments in all their rights as the most com-
Republic-petent administrations of our domestic concerns,
anism and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet anchor of our peace at home and our safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people,—a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the sword of revolution where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority,—the vital principle of Republics from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia,—our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts, and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce its handmaid; the diffusion of information, and the arraignment of all abuses at the bar of public reason; freedom of

¹ Adams's *History of the United States*, vol. i., p. 199.

religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of person under the protection of the *habeas corpus*; and trial by juries impartially selected;—these principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages and the blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment; they should be the creed of our political faith, the text of our civic instruction, the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.”

By this moderate statement of his party principles, Jefferson hoped to win to his party's support a large body of moderate Federalists, and in this he succeeded. The body of the people in Pennsylvania and New York, and even in New England, were democratic in temper and in spirit, and though the international situation brought the Republican administrations of Jefferson and Madison into a reluctant and unpopular conduct of a commercial war, the wise principles of their party, combined with the factious opposition of the New England Federalists, soon led to the complete dominance of the Republican party. Jeffersonian democracy has never since been seriously combated by any political party, but all subsequent parties have assumed to represent its principles.

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CHAPTER III

THE PERIOD OF PERSONAL POLITICS

THE second period of our party history under the National Government may be said to extend from 1816 to 1832, from the final collapse of the Federalists to the appearance of the Whigs. This was a time of transition, of reorganization, when the political forces of the country were finding new lines of division. With the close of the War of 1812, the Federalist party disappeared. It could not survive its factious opposition to that war. The party could not stand the opprobrium of the Hartford Convention. Many of the Federalist leaders had given their support to that most unpopular gathering, while many others of them felt that the Hartford Assembly should have adopted even more "effectual measures" of opposition to the war. The party could not remove the public conviction that its little conclave of leaders had been secretly plotting treason and disunion. Thirty-four Federalist electors voted for Rufus King for President in 1816, but they were the last surviving remnants of the party of Hamilton and John Adams, and their vote was the party's last expiring act.

The Second
Period of
Party
History

Jefferson had said in his famous inaugural address: "We are all Federalists, we are all Republicans." The

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dictum was realized, at least the half of it that Jefferson desired,—the Federalists had ceased to be, and the people were all Republicans.

Monroe and Tompkins were elected in 1820 without opposition, the only instance of its kind in our history **“Era of Good Feeling”** since the election of Washington. Because all parties were merged into one, this period has been called the “era of good feeling.” But there was anything but “good feeling” among the rival political leaders of the time. Voters grouped themselves about their favorite party leaders, the rival Republican aspirants for the presidency. Among these leaders and their respective groups, bickerings and animosities were fierce and bitter. This aspect of politics at that time has caused this to be called the “period of personal politics.” There were “Adams men,” “Jackson men,” “Clay men,” “Calhounites,” and “Clintonians.” But all these leaders and presidential aspirants, both in 1824 and 1828, belonged to the same party. The “Adams and Clay Republicans” and the “Jackson Republicans” acknowledged, for a while at least, each other’s claim to the party name.

“Principles, not men,” has been a notable maxim in our political history. It is not to be understood that this maxim was reversed in this period of personal politics. The personal groups were not without principles. All were Republican, and each group believed that its leader best represented the true principles of Jeffersonian Republicanism. The “Clintonians,” for instance, who first conducted a presidential contest on the basis of a personal following, represented opposition to Madison in 1812, but they professed to do so on principles which they considered important. The “Clintonians,” in support-

ing DeWitt Clinton, a Republican, against Madison, opposed the nomination of presidential candidates by Congressional caucus as being by undelegated authority; they opposed an official regency and the Virginia dynasty as being a monopoly by particular States of the offices of the Government. This, they held, was unrepublican and tended to oligarchy. They were particularly opposed to continuing a citizen of Virginia in the presidency "unless it can be shown that that State enjoys a corresponding monopoly of talents and patriotism." Virginia had already had the presidency for twenty years out of twenty-four,—a practice that had arrayed the "agricultural against the commercial interest of the country"; and the "Clintonians" urged especially opposition to Madison, who was "lacking in energy, decision, and efficiency." The Federalists in 1812 made no nomination, but united with the discontented Republicans in support of Clinton, but the effort to defeat Madison was unavailing. The opposition was tainted with Federalism.

Monroe allayed opposition; but after his administration the personal candidacies in politics revived, and the election of 1824 became famous for the contest between the six great Republican leaders who divided among them the support of the country,—Adams, Jackson, Clay, Crawford, Clinton, and Calhoun.

Soon after this conflict around personal leaders in 1824, the various Republican elements began naturally to line up into two opposing parties on the basis of principles and public policies. New parties were forming according to the leanings of men toward the three great public domestic questions of that time,—the Bank, the Tariff, and Internal Improvements.

Divisions on
Public
Policies
again Ap-
pear, 1828

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The banking interest desired a strong national banking institution, with national regulation of the currency; the commercial interest desired good roads, improvements in rivers and harbors, and

The Bank, consequent easy communication between
The Tariff, the States. A new manufacturing interest
Internal Im- had also arisen which desired protection to
provements manufactures. Thus the conditions were

ripening for a new party alignment. Those who advocated these public measures, who favored the agency and the activity of the National Government in their support, and who believed that the Constitution conferred the necessary power to advance these ends,

became *National-Republicans*, under the
National- leadership of Clay and Adams. On the
Republicans other hand, the *Democratic-Republicans*,—

those who thought more of local self-government by the people directly and less of national power, the former Republicans of the more strict States' rights school who had a leaning to strict construction, limitation of the powers of the General Government, and who were especially opposed to bank corporations and internal improvements, except under State control,—

Jacksonian these were ready to enlist under the banner
Democrats and name of *Jacksonian Democrats*, or plain *Democrats*,—the only "true blue" Republicans, as they soon claimed to be.

The name *National-Republican* was assumed by the party of Clay and Adams towards the end of John Quincy Adams's presidency. Adams, from 1825 to 1829, was the official leader of the party. But his personal animosities, his lack of tactful address and of the politician's art, and his quarrels with the old Federalists of New England, whom he charged with a

design to dissolve the Union and to establish a separate confederation in 1808,—these factors alienated much support from Adams, and the leadership of the party passed to Clay. Adams became a free lance in isolated independence.

In the campaign of 1828, politics were still chiefly personal. Jackson was to be vindicated. The election did not turn on the candidates' public views or public policies. What Jackson stood for, either on the matter of internal improvement, the tariff, or the bank, was not positively, or, at least, not publicly known. It was, in the minds of the Jacksonians, a question of the people against political management and combinations. Throughout Adams's administration, Jackson and his managers cultivated the feeling among the masses that the people had been defrauded of their choice. Jackson had received more votes in the Electoral College than Adams; he had surpassed Adams in the popular vote; when the election came to the House of Representatives, Jackson and his friends contended that the Representatives there should vote as their States had voted in the College. This was not done; but, on the other hand, a combination, a "corrupt bargain," as was falsely charged, was formed between Adams and Clay, by which Clay was to make Adams President and Adams was to make Clay Secretary of State. With all these personal grievances in mind the Jackson party entered on a four-years' campaign to beat Adams in 1828. After Jackson's personal victory and vindication in this campaign, during his first administration and under his leadership the modern Democratic party, as we know it to-day, came into being.

Jackson's decisive success in 1828 clearly revealed

the fact that the masses were coming into larger political control. With Jackson, the people had come into their own. The "plain, common people" were now to rule. Patrician leaders should no longer presume to arrange candidates and policies for the people, but the people themselves should give their commands to their leaders.

Hitherto the country had known the leadership only of New England and the South, regions peopled straight out of the Old World; the one ruled by a professional aristocracy of ministers and lawyers, the other by a social and proprietary aristocracy of land-owners; both governed alike in thought and action by old traditions, and both smacking, whatever their professions of democratic principle, of an Old World taste for privilege and for the authority of a trained, experienced disciplined minority.¹

The Presidents before Jackson had been aristocrats, four from Virginia, two from New England. The difference between Jefferson and Jackson was not in their political principles—they professed the same beliefs—but in social stock and breeding, in their life and habits, in their antecedents and material conditions. The democratic spirit represented in Jackson had been promoted by the westward movement, by the equality among the pioneer settlers, by the removal of suffrage restrictions, by the admission of Western States. Jackson could not plead pride of ancestry, for he had been born in a hut of poverty and had been reared in trial and adversity; by this he came the better to know and represent the humble people. Jefferson's teachings had borne their fruit. The people

**The Masses
Reject the
Leadership
of the
Classes**

¹ Woodrow Wilson, *A History of the American People*, vol. iii., p. 237.

had come to take him at his word, and in Jackson they were now to make real the democracy that Jefferson had taught the nation to profess. Property-holding, education, an influential clergy in New England; men of manor lands, of counting-houses, ships, and commercial connections, in the Middle States; the aristocracy of slave-plantations, of cavalier gentlemen, of traditional "first families," in Virginia and the South,—these were the forces that had been in actual control of the country. The perversion of the popular will in 1824 was the natural and logical result of this aristocratic régime, and it had been possible because these classes continued to have the audacity to think that they were wiser and could govern better than the people themselves,—the plain honest folk, whom these aristocrats looked upon as an incompetent and ignorant mob. Such was the democratic feeling.

Jackson's triumph was partly personal, and therefore his election fittingly belongs to the era of personal politics. But it also closes that era, and with his administration another era begins because his triumph represents a political purpose and conviction adapted to become the unifying basis of a new party alignment. This unifying cause struck deeper than questions of policy and construction, deeper, even, than States' rights and nationalism which had been so potent in Jefferson's triumph. The unifying force that welded Jackson's supporters into a great party lay at the root of republican government;—it was in the determination that the government should be of and by the people. Men in Pennsylvania who believed in protection; men in the West who believed in internal improvements; men in the South and West who believed in free trade; men in the South who believed in States'

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rights; men in all sections who believed in nationalism and broad construction,—all joined with Jackson to make the government one of the people. These democratic forces, ready for real party life, needed only astute political managers and organizers, who were at hand in men like Martin Van Buren and William B. Lewis, to be brought to triumph. As the party of the "plain people" these forces were no longer ashamed to call themselves *Democratic*. Under this new democratization of the government the name that had been originally applied to the followers of Jefferson in derision was to be borne by the followers of Jackson as a decoration of honor.

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CHAPTER IV

THE WHIGS AND THE JACKSONIAN DEMOCRATS

THE third period of our party history, under the National Government, is marked by the rise and decline of the Whigs, from 1832 to 1856.

This was the period of party conflicts over the Second United States Banks, the Tariff, Internal Improvements, the Sub-Treasury, Jackson's Executive Veto and power of removal, the Annexation of Texas, the War with Mexico, and, finally, the compromises touching slavery in 1850.

Third
Period of
Party
History

The principles and organization of the National Republicans—so far as they had an organization—became the nucleus for the new party of the Whigs. The party, still under the name of the National Republicans, in a national convention at Baltimore, on December 12, 1831, unanimously nominated Clay for the presidency. Following the recommendation of this convention, a "Young Men's National Republican Convention" met at Washington on May 7, 1832, and adopted a series of ten resolutions as expressive of the principles of the party,—“the first platform ever adopted by a national convention.”¹ These resolutions favored

Origin of
the Whigs

¹ Stanwood, *History of the Presidency*.

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“adequate protection to American industry”; “a uniform system of internal improvements by the General Government”; the decision of constitutional questions by the Supreme Court; defended the Senate against the Executive, and denounced the “indiscriminate removal of public officers for the mere difference of opinion as a gross abuse of power, corrupting to the morals and dangerous to the liberties of the country.” This platform is sometimes referred to as that of the National *Democratic* party, which shows that the term “Democratic” had become popular, and that the opponents of Jackson were not willing that his wing of the old Democratic-Republicans should monopolize the popular name. But the Democratic name was already too well attached to the followers of Jackson to allow of its being otherwise appropriated, and the opposition had to cast about for another. The name *Whig* was not applied till 1834, when it was taken up as a popular rallying term that would appeal to all political elements in opposition to Jackson. “Whig” called up old Revolutionary sentiment and loyalty. The Whigs announced themselves as the true followers and successors of the men of '76. They would stand, as their sires of the Revolution had stood, in stout opposition to executive prerogative and usurpation, whether on the part of King George in 1776, or of “King Andrew” in 1834.

The Whigs, then, assumed to stand for the true Republican and Patriot position of opposition to the increase of the power of the Executive at the expense of the legislature, as Jefferson did in 1798 and 1800, and for opposition to the high prerogative, or Tory, doctrine of Jackson, who, by his defiance of the Supreme Court,

his disregard of the rights of the Senate, his high-handed use of the veto, his summary political removals without cause, seemed to be usurping all the functions of government to himself, like an absolute monarch.

It has been said by an eminent writer that, in its permanent significance, the real question raised by the Whigs was (and it was fundamental in the American political system), whether we should have parliamentary government or presidential government in the United States. Should the Executive be coördinate with, and independent of, the legislative branch, or should Congressional control be established over the administration? If the people had allowed the Senate's censure of Jackson to stand; if they had authorized his impeachment by the House; if they had reversed his policy on the deposits and the bank, the Executive would have been subordinated to the control of Congress, and executive independence would have been ultimately destroyed.¹

Significant
Interpreta-
tion of the
Whig
Position

It is not evident that this interpretation of the issue was in the minds either of the Jackson Democrats or of the Whig opposition. The Whigs never defined and announced the idea of legislative supremacy for themselves. They did not claim to embody that principle; they, rather, made use of the old Whig anti-prerogative sentiment, the opposition to one-man power, and the popularity of *representative* government, in order to rally opposition to Jackson. They did not come out for a change in the Constitution modifying the veto power in restraint of executive influence over public policies until their own Vice-President had used his veto (upon succeeding to the presidency) to defeat a

¹ Professor Burgess, *Middle Period*.

policy that had been claimed as distinctively Whig. When the bank question and the tariff question had dropped out of public notice, after Tyler's administration, the question of governmental form disappeared too, which may go to show that the latter was not regarded as *fundamental* by the Whig leaders of that day, but merely as accessory to the economic policies that were really *Whig*.

The Whigs, in 1834, when the party name first came into use (if we consider the party as distinct from the National Republicans), are to be looked upon chiefly as a party of opposition. Jackson's positive policies had aroused many elements against him. The Whigs stood for marshaling these forces under one banner. The diverse, not to say conflicting, elements making up the early Whigs were as follows:

1. The National Republicans, the advocates under Clay and Adams of the "American System,"—a national tariff, a national bank, and national internal improvements. This group represented positive economic principles, but at this time they were National Republican principles rather than Whig, and they had found party formulation before the Whigs, as a party, appeared in the arena.

2. The Nullifiers and the extreme States' rights men, who were offended at Jackson's policy toward South Carolina, which, as they thought, threatened the legitimate rights of the States. In addition to Calhoun and the South Carolinians, John Tyler and other representatives of the Old Virginia School were illustrations of this kind.

3. A majority of those known as "Anti-Masons."

4. Former Jackson men who condemned his high-

handed conduct in the use of the veto and the removing power,—the “immolation of Duane and the subserviency of Taney,” as Greeley expressed it.

5. The personal opponents of Jackson,—those who considered him incompetent and as guilty of executive usurpations.

There was no basis in these diverse elements for a party of organic unity. The Whigs were never a party of fixed principles and harmonious purpose. It spent most of its campaigns in “beating up recruits regardless of principles,—the bane of the party throughout its whole national existence.”

“No delegate could come amiss to their conventions: the original Adams Republican, the Nullifier of South Carolina, the Anti-Mason of New York or Pennsylvania, the States’ rights delegate from Georgia, and the general mass of the dissatisfied everywhere could find a refuge in its councils. It asked no questions; it ventured but twice in its history (1844 and 1852) to adopt a platform of principles, and it ventured but once (1844) to nominate a candidate for the presidency with any avowed political principles.”¹

Its only avowed principles were involved in its advocacy of the measures included in the “American System,”—its inheritance from the National Republicans,—and opposition to the veto and executive encroachments. The Whig platform in 1840 was but a shout for harmony among all the forces that were anti-Jackson and anti-Van Buren, while its campaign was but an effort (all too successful) to drown the national reason in a hullabaloo of political excitement, with its “claptrap of processions, songs, emblems, and slang”²;

¹ Professor Johnston in Lalor’s *Cyclopedia of Political Science*.

² Stanwood, p. 206.

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while in 1848 its platform was but a eulogy of Taylor and an attempt to convince the voters that its candidate was a Whig. In 1844, in connection with longer planks commending and eulogizing their candidates, a brief plank summarized the party principles:

“A well-regulated currency; a tariff for revenue to defray the necessary expenses of the government, and discriminating with special reference to the domestic labor of the country; the distribution of the proceeds from the sales of the public lands; a single term for the presidency; a reform of Executive usurpations; an administration of practical efficiency, controlled by a well-regulated and wise economy.”

In addition to these, and conspicuous among its proposals, was its demand for the limitation of the executive veto, so that the “will of the nation should be uncontrolled by the will of one man.”¹

As Jackson's personality disappeared as an issue, as the economic questions sank in importance, and the slavery question arose to prominence, the Whigs were even more unable to act unitedly. The Northern and Southern wings could not be held together. The Wilmot Proviso, —the proposal to prohibit slavery by Congressional action in the newly acquired Territories,—acted as a dividing wedge. It is true that the Whigs elected their candidate, another military hero without any known political principles, in 1848; but this was because of the divisions within the Democratic party. The Whigs included strong pro-slavery men in the South and radical anti-slavery men in the North, while a very large body

¹ Address of Whig members of Congress, Niles's *Register*, September 18, 1841; see p. 153, the Author's *American Republic and Its Government*.

of Northern Whigs cared very little about the slavery question. The latter were opposed to the agitation of the subject and wished to evade, or avoid, it altogether. It is said that Thaddeus Stevens, one of the keenest satirists that ever sat in Congress, suggested to the Speaker in 1850, after the Fugitive Slave Law had been voted on, that he had better send a page into the lobby to inform the Whig members there that they might safely return to the House, as the slavery question had been disposed of. This well expressed how impossible it was, with the slavery question becoming more and more prominent, that the Whig party should meet the situation and take any decided stand on the dominant issue. How could Toombs of Georgia, and Giddings of Ohio, get on together in the same party? Could a pro-slavery "fire-eater" and a "fanatical Abolitionist" abide together? Could the "Conscience Whigs" (radical anti-slavery men) and the "Cotton Whigs" (for peace at any price on slavery for the sake of the cotton trade) and the "Silver Grays" (the administration forces under Fillmore),—could these forces all stand together in support of the same platforms and the same candidates? One more effort, at any rate, was to be made, and, in 1852, the Whigs attempted to hold together these conflicting elements of their party on the basis of the compromises of 1850. These compromises they accepted as a final settlement of the slavery question,—as a "finality,"—in the historic resolution of their platform of 1852:

"The series of acts [of 1850], the act known as the Fugitive Slave Law included, are received and acquiesced in by the Whig party as a settlement of the exciting questions which they embrace; we will maintain them and insist upon

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their strict enforcement; and we deprecate all further agitation of the question thus settled as dangerous to our peace, and will discountenance all efforts to continue or renew such agitation, whenever, wherever, or however the attempt may be made; and we will maintain this system as essential to the nationality of the Whig party and the integrity of the Union."

It was this resolution that led to the remark that the "Whig party died of an attempt to swallow the Fugitive Slave Law."

The campaign of 1852 was the last national effort the Whig party ever made. General Scott, its presidential candidate of that year, carried but four States, —Massachusetts and Vermont in the North, and Kentucky and Tennessee in the South. The party was as good as dead, and with the increasing anti-slavery agitation brought about by the events between 1852 and 1856, especially by the attempted enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law and the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, a new party had to be found to oppose the Democracy. Remnants of the Whigs under the name of the American party nominated Fillmore and Dayton and cast 874,000 of the popular votes in 1856; and the "Constitutional Union" party of 1860, which nominated Bell and Everett in 1860 and cast 587,000 popular votes and carried three States with 39 electoral votes, was composed very largely of "old line" conservative Whigs. Mr. Schouler says:

"Whiggery in its time had been less patrician, less distrustful of the people than Federalism; but the Federalists in their day had accomplished much for history that was permanent while the Whigs left nothing. Its honorable

The Whigs and Jacksonian Democrats 51

epitaph may be that 'it loved the Union and sought sincerely to preserve it.'"¹

While the Whigs as a party left little in permanent results, yet when we look to the personnel of its leadership it will be seen that the party must be accorded a high rank on account of the individual services of its statesmen. Clay, Webster, and John Quincy Adams are a trio of names without many peers in American political history, and Calhoun acted with the Whigs until 1840; there were no abler leaders from the South than Bell of Tennessee; Berrien, Forsyth, Toombs, and Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia; while Fessenden of Maine, Collamer of Vermont; Winthrop, Choate, and Everett of Massachusetts; Gideon Granger, Millard Fillmore, Greeley, Weed, and Seward of New York; Bayard and Clayton of Delaware; Mangum, Badger, and Graham of North Carolina; Giddings, Corwin, and Ewing of Ohio; Richard W. Thompson and Caleb B. Smith of Indiana, were all leaders of the first rank. These names suggest an array of talent and leadership certainly not excelled, perhaps not equaled, in the ranks of any party in our history.

In this period of our party history the Whigs were confronted by the Democratic party. This party inherited the name and prestige of Jeffersonian Democracy, and for the larger part of this period they were under the leadership of two of the most astute of party captains, Jackson and Van Buren. The Jacksonian Democrats denounced the Whigs as Federalists, while they themselves claimed to be the champions of the common people. In the first contest in which the

Personnel
of Whig
Leadership

¹ *History of the United States*, vol. v., p. 249.

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Democrats met the opposing party, in 1832, Jackson embodied in himself and in his record the principles and policies of his party. He had made a record as a

“Tribune of the People,” against Nullification, against the “monster,” the United States Bank, and against “Nick” Biddle, the king of the “Money Power.” Jackson, it was contended, had come in by a spontaneous movement of the people,—but it was by a spontaneity that had been carefully cultivated by Van Buren, Hill, Lewis, and other Jackson managers and advisers who afterwards became known as his “Kitchen Cabinet,”—the backstair influence of Jackson’s administration.

The Democrats published no national platform either in 1832 or in 1836. But in 1836 the Democrats of New York State published a platform which was generally accepted by the party as a declaration of principles. This asserted:

“(1) Unqualified hostility to bank notes and paper money as a circulating medium, because gold and silver is the only safe and constitutional currency.”

Democratic Position in 1836

“(2) Hostility to all monopolies by legislation, because they are violations of equal rights of the people.

“(3) Hostility to the creation of vested rights in corporations beyond the reach of succeeding legislatures, as dangerous usurpations of the people’s sovereign rights; all acts of incorporation might be altered by succeeding legislatures.”

This party proposed that the people should not be put into the power of monopolies and corporations through a system of vested rights or by means of

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irrepealable charters. In 1840, the Democrats published a notable platform in National Convention, the first regular platform of the party. They asserted:

“(1) That the National Government is one of limited powers, to be administered under strict construction.

**Democratic
Platform
of 1840**

“(2) That the Constitution does not grant power to the National Government to carry on a system of internal improvements.

“(3) That ‘justice and sound policy forbid the General Government to foster one branch of industry to the detriment of another,’ or ‘to cherish one portion of the country to the injury of another,’—an expression in manifest opposition to the tariff.

“(4) That Congress has no power to charter a United States Bank; that such an institution is ‘one of deadly hostility to the best interests of the country, dangerous to our republican institutions and the liberties of the people, and calculated to place the business of the country within the control of a concentrated money power and above the laws and the will of the people.’ Government moneys should be separated from banking institutions.

“(5) That Congress has no power under the Constitution ‘to interfere with or control the domestic institutions of the several States, and that such States are the sole and proper judges of everything pertaining to their own affairs not prohibited by the Constitution; that all efforts by Abolitionists or others, made to induce Congress to interfere with questions of slavery, or take incipient steps in relation thereto [referring to petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and of the inter-State slave trade] are calculated to lead to the most alarming and dangerous consequences, and that all such efforts have an inevitable tendency to diminish the happiness of the people and endanger the stability and permanence of the Union,

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and ought not to be countenanced by any friend to our political institutions.' ”

They reasserted the principles of the Declaration of Independence and favored easy naturalization of foreigners as in harmony with these principles. The resolution touching the slavery question was essentially the position of the party on that subject throughout this period of its history.

In 1844, the Democrats reasserted the platform of 1840. On the question of territorial expansion they declared for the “re-occupation of Oregon and the re-annexation of Texas,” asserting that the American title to the whole of Oregon was “clear and unquestionable.” Texas for the South, “fifty-four forty or fight,” as a rallying cry for the North, a tariff for revenue for the country at large, with sufficient evasion of the tariff issue in Pennsylvania to carry that State,—this was the campaign combination that carried the Democrats back into power in 1844. The party measures of Polk’s administration were all opposed by the Whigs; the aggressive attitude toward Mexico leading to the Mexican War, the backdown on Oregon in the adjustment of the northwest boundary line; the Sub-Treasury, and the *ad valorem* Walker Tariff of 1846,—these items indicate the record of the Democratic party on the industrial and territorial questions of that day. In 1848, the Democrats were defeated because of factional divisions in New York. In that year, and again in 1852, the party reasserted its historic platform of 1840. In 1852, the resolution of 1840 touching slavery¹ was held to embrace the whole subject of slavery as agitated

Democratic
Position in
1844

¹ See p. 47.

in Congress, and the party promised to stand on that national platform and to abide by a faithful execution of the compromise measures of 1850, including the Fugitive Slave Law. As the party of strict construction and States' rights, finding its strength largely in the South and leaning toward Free Trade, the party promised

"to abide by and uphold the principles laid down in the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798, and in the report of Mr. Madison to the Virginia Legislature in 1799; that it adopts those principles as constituting one of the main foundations of its political creed, and is resolved to carry them out in their obvious meaning and import."

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CHAPTER V

THE ABOLITIONISTS AND THE LIBERTY PARTY

The Crisis of 1854 THE years from 1854 to 1856 mark a turning-point in American party history. It was then that parties were reconstituted on the basis of resistance to the extension of slavery. The influence of the slavery issue on the Whig and Democratic parties in this period is one of the most important themes in our party history. To understand that influence is to understand the facts and forces leading to the origin of the modern Republican party, which conducted its first national campaign in 1856. To understand how these facts and forces worked together for the formation of a new party it is necessary to take an historical survey of the anti-slavery struggle covering the preceding twenty-five years. Only an outline of that great controversy can be presented in this sketch.

We have briefly referred to the neutral or hostile attitude of the old parties toward the anti-slavery cause.

Beginning of the Anti-Slavery Agitation This attitude weakened and finally disrupted the Democrats; it demoralized and finally annihilated the Whigs. The anti-slavery agitation was acting like a dividing wedge within the organization of both parties. This agitation was promoted,—the wedge was being driven

The Abolitionists and the Liberty Party 57

in,—sometimes by men who cared little for party and all for the cause of the slave, but oftener by events in the progress of pro-slavery aggression which seemed destined to promote the crisis which Lincoln defined when he said that the people had to decide whether the Republic should become all slave or all free. The student of our party history must notice these positive forces in the slavery controversy that brought about this crisis.

On January 1, 1831, William Lloyd Garrison issued the first number of his *Liberator*. On the subject of slavery he proposed to “be as harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice.” On that subject he did not wish to speak, or think, “*Liberator*” or write with moderation.

Garrison
and the

“Urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present; I am in earnest; I will not equivocate; I will not excuse; I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard. The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal, and to hasten the resurrection of the dead.”¹

It was the office of Lundy, Garrison, Johnson, Phillips, May, Lovejoy, Whittier, and their Abolition coadjutors to arouse the national conscience. The early Abolitionists were stirring agitators. In 1832, the New England Anti-Slavery Society was formed. In 1833, the cause advanced to the organization of the American Anti-Slavery Society. The Declaration of Principles of this Abolition Society re-proclaimed the undying principles of the Declaration of Independence that “all men are created equal, endowed with certain

¹ *Liberator*.

inalienable rights among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"; they asserted that the

**Declaration
of the
American
Anti-Slavery
Society,
1833** "guilt of our national oppression was unequaled by that of any other nation on the face of the earth, and therefore the nation is bound to repent instantly, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free;

that no man has a right to enslave or imbrute his brother, or to treat him for one moment as a piece of merchandise; that there is no difference in principle between the African Slave Trade and American Slavery; that every American citizen who retains a human being in bondage is, according to Scripture, a man-stealer¹; that the slaves ought instantly to be set free and brought under the protection of the law; no matter how long they had been in bondage their right to be free could never have been alienated; and that all laws now in force admitting the right of slavery are, before God, utterly null and void." They demanded *immediate emancipation without compensation*.

As to the constitutional aspects of slavery, these early Abolitionists "fully and unanimously recognize the sovereignty of each State to legislate exclusively upon the subject of slavery which is tolerated within its limits; we concede that Congress under the national compact has no right to interfere with any of the Slave States in relation to this momentous subject."² This principle was embodied in the constitution of the Society and Judge William Jay, one of the Abolition leaders, held that he could consistently take his oath to support the Constitution of the United States. But these

¹ Exodus xxi., 16.

² Declaration of the American Anti-Slavery Society, December, 1833, *Life of Garrison*, by his children, vol. i., p. 411.

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Abolitionists held that Congress had a right, and "was solemnly bound to suppress the domestic Slave Trade between the States, and to abolish slavery in those portions of our territory which the Constitution has placed under its exclusive jurisdiction." Wherein the Constitution made a citizen liable to be called upon to help suppress a slave insurrection; wherein it authorized a slaveowner to vote for three-fifths of his slaves; wherein it required a standing army, or a navy on the coast, for the support and protection of slavery in the South; wherein it authorized the seizure and return of an escaping slave,—these guarantees, nominated in the constitutional bond, must be declared forfeit. Such relation to slavery is criminal and full of danger and *must be broken up*.

Such were the principles of the early Abolitionists. Their purposes were:

"(1) To organize anti-slavery societies, if possible, in every city, town, and village in our land.

"(2) To send forth agents to lift up the voice of remonstrance, of warning, of entreaty, and of rebuke. **Purposes of the Abolitionists**

"(3) To circulate anti-slavery tracts and periodicals.

"(4) To enlist the pulpit and the press.

"(5) To purify the churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery, and to spare no means to bring the nation to speedy repentance."

This promulgation was like a declaration of war. It was accepted as such by the South. The Southern people looked upon the Abolitionists as incendiaries and madmen, a band of reckless and unreasoning fanatics, who were bent on exciting a slave insurrection; who were wild enthusiasts for the amalgamation of the races; who **Effect of the Abolition Agitation**

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were seeking to spur on the National Government to violent and unconstitutional abolition of slavery within the States; who were "ready to fulfil the fiend-like errand of mingling the blood of the master and the slave, to whose fate they were equally indifferent, with the smouldering ruins of our peaceful dwellings."¹

It is easy to see that between the Abolitionists and the defenders of slavery there was an inevitable and an irrepressible conflict. Between such forces there could be no peace.

The intense antagonism aroused by the abolition agitation was not confined to the South. It stirred to resentment also the conservative elements, the political and commercial classes in the North, whose peace and interests the agitation disturbed. It was felt that unless the Abolitionists could be put down the whole North would be held responsible. The immediate effect of the agitation seemed to strengthen the institution of slavery. The South felt driven to its defense. The slave codes of the Southern States were made more drastic; voluntary emancipation was restrained; the life of free colored people in the South was made more intolerable; demands were increased for the return of fugitive slaves; public prices were set upon the heads of prominent Abolitionists; and Southern public men, instead of speaking of slavery as a social and political evil, came now to defend slavery as a "positive good," "the most perfect system of social and political happiness that ever existed"; instead of being a political evil, domestic slavery is the corner-stone of our republican edifice.²

¹ Governor MacDuffie's message on the slavery question to the South Carolina Legislature, 1835.

² MacDuffie's message. See also the speeches of Calhoun and the "Corner-Stone Speech" of Alexander H. Stephens, in 1861.

The Abolitionists and the Liberty Party 61

In the country at large the Abolitionists were met with obloquy and violence. Their meetings were disturbed, their speakers were egged and stoned, and their constitutional rights of free assembly, free petition, free press, and free speech were denied them. Birney's meetings were broken up, Garrison was mobbed, Lovejoy was killed, and John Quincy Adams and Joshua R. Giddings were bound by gag rules while struggling in the House of Representatives in defense of the right of petition and the freedom of debate. These persecutions and denials of constitutional rights made martyrs of the Abolitionists and multiplied converts and recruits to their ranks. They ceased to be mere champions of abolition. In view of the violent outrages heaped upon them, it now seemed to more moderate men that in the persons of the Abolitionists "the most sacred rights of freemen had been assailed. They were sufferers for the liberty of thought, speech, and press, and in maintaining this liberty against insult and violence they won for themselves an honored place among defenders of American liberty."¹

In spite of the fiercest and most raging opposition that any cause ever encountered, the Abolitionists steadily and rapidly increased in numbers.

Within nine years after the organization of their first society there were two thousand anti-slavery societies, with two hundred thousand members. They were consecrated to their cause, being ready to seal their testimony with their lives, and many of them sacrificed property, home, and friendship, and even life itself for the slave. In the face of the furious opposition which they had excited

¹ William Ellery Channing, letter to Birney, 1836, *Works*.

they would pursue their way, stand bravely and persistently for their rights, and let the heathen rage! It was by such devotion, not to say heroism, that the moral foundations were laid on which a party was to rise to power to resist the aggressions of slavery.

The increase in the anti-slavery forces was caused not so much by the agitation and arguments of the Abolitionists themselves as by the progress of events. Among these events the dominant fact in the decade between 1835 and 1845 was the movement for the annexation of Texas. With the question of territorial expansion was inseparably connected the extension of excessive and inequitable political power that came to slaveholders by their three-fifths representation for their slaves. This led many anti-slavery politicians to resist slavery extension from political as well as from moral considerations. Before the movement for Texas was fully under way Abolitionism had passed from being merely a moral agitation into a political force. In so passing from the field of morals and religion into the field of politics there occurred the Abolition schism of 1840. In that year the American Anti-Slavery Society was rent into factions.

By this year (1840) the aggressive anti-slavery forces are to be distinguished in three groups.

1. The Garrisonian Abolitionists. 2. The Liberty Party Abolitionists. 3. The Anti-Slavery men of abolition proclivities who for some time remained in affiliation with their old parties.

The Garrisonians formed "an extreme small wing" of the Abolitionists. These were the fanatical radicals. In 1840, the Garrisonians, in opposition to the more moderate Abolitionists, became identified with many

Abolition
Schism,
1839-1840

The Abolitionists and the Liberty Party 63

other moral and social movements, and this tended to divide the American Anti-Slavery Society, by connecting it, or its members, as some thought, with various hobbies and fads.¹

The Gar-
risonians

Woman's rights, perfectionism, anti-church, anti-clergy, anti-Sabbath, anti-marriage,—these terms indicate the radical and eccentric ideas to which the Garrisonians were more or less committed. Finding in Church and State, not coöperation and favor for his cause, but hostility and persecution rather, Garrison became hostile to both these institutions. He denounced the Church and the clergy as immoral. He and his followers were the disunion Abolitionists; they denounced the Constitution, contended for abstract and absolute righteousness according to their own canons, and they refused all coöperation with any one who would not go the full length of their extreme positions. "No union with slave holders," "The Constitution is a covenant with death and an agreement with hell!" These are familiar Garrisonian maxims. Garrison's followers became committed to the non-coercion, non-resistance, no-government theory in politics, like theoretical anarchists. They refused to vote or to act with others for political ends. They hoped to reform the Government by renouncing all connection with it; to remove political evils by refusing all association with political parties. They claimed to rely on moral suasion alone, on appeals to the consciences of the people. They were typical "come-outers," seceders, and non-conformists, especially resisting all the ordinary associated means of political action.

Of the anti-slavery forces aroused to action by the revival between 1830 and 1840 only a very small part

¹ Birney's *Birney*.

were "Garrisonians," probably not more than one fifth of the members of the anti-slavery societies existing at the time of the schism of 1840.¹ Nor did they increase in numbers or influence during the next twenty years. Their fidelity, devotion, courage, conviction, persistency, and energy were unexcelled, and these qualities may have given them an influence out of all proportion to their numbers. These factors also, in addition to the designs of their pro-slavery opponents, brought it to pass that the term "Abolitionist" became identical with this small band of fanatical agitators. It was the wild vagaries and the desocializing attitude of this extreme group that brought such opprobrium to the name "Abolitionist," and it was this that led the later and really forceful leaders of the anti-slavery movement, like Seward, Chase, and Lincoln, always to deny that they were ever Abolitionists of the Garrison stripe. No anti-slavery statesman or politician was, of course, a Garrisonian. And of the nearly two million voters who, between 1856 and 1860, fought the good fight that the Republic might be all free, the Garrisonian Abolitionists were but a mere handful.

Very different were the men of the Liberty party. These were the political Abolitionists who believed in the formation of a third party to promote their cause. These men believed in keeping clear of entanglements with other causes. Abolitionism was the only *ism* they had organized to promote. To promote this cause they thought they were justified in voting, holding office, and in organizing a separate party machine. These were Abolitionists like Birney, Whittier, the Tappans, Gerritt Smith, and, later, Salmon P. Chase, Giddings, Hale, and Julian.

**The Liberty
Party**

¹ Wilson's *Slave Power*, vol. i.

The Abolitionists and the Liberty Party 65

Many joined the party in 1844 who did not believe in its necessity or wisdom in 1840. The party cast but seven thousand votes for Birney in 1840, but they increased their voting strength to sixty-two thousand, again for Birney, in 1844.

The Liberty party, in its purpose, was a national, not a sectional, party. It asserted that it was organized not merely for the overthrow of slavery, but for the vindication of the great underlying principle of democracy, equality of human rights. Equality of human rights was in harmony with the spirit of American liberty, and the "true spirit of the Constitution." Slavery was the greatest and immediate obstacle to the realization of this noble ideal of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. On that subject the Liberty party asserted:

"That there should be absolute and unqualified divorcement of the General Government from slavery.

"That slavery is strictly local and rests only on State legislation. All slavery within the limits of national jurisdiction should be abolished.

"That the General Government has no power to establish or continue slavery anywhere. All treaties, or acts of Congress, continuing or favoring slavery in the District of Columbia or the national territory (Florida) are unconstitutional."

Thus the Liberty party held slavery to be a creature of State law; it was sustained, not by the common law, nor by the law of the Constitution, but only by positive enactments within the States which admit and sanction it. The Constitution is an instrument of liberty. The nation is non-slaveholding, and all patronage and support hitherto extended to slavery by the National

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Government should be withdrawn, and the influence of the national authority everywhere ought to be arrayed on the side of liberty and free labor.

The third wing of the positive anti-slavery forces in 1840 and 1844 were the political abolitionists who yet thought the formation of a third party was inexpedient. These readily accepted the general principle underlying the contention of the Liberty party: That slavery was sectional, freedom national; that responsibility was coextensive with power; that wherever the National Government had power over slavery, wherever it was in any way responsible for it, there that power and responsibility should be exercised for its restraint and extinction. Opposition, not support, should be the national policy. Slavery was not to be looked upon merely as an inconvenience about which the nation could be indifferent. It was not an ordinary "domestic institution" (a misleading and deceitful euphony) entitled to national protection and patronage. But slavery was to be regarded rather as a blighting and ruinous evil, a great wrong, a fearful and barbarous power, which was now fighting, not only for security at home, but for expansion and empire within the nation. As such it should be everywhere opposed.

These were bedrock and enduring principles, and they formed the moral basis on which the conflict against slavery was fought to a finish. The issue thrust into American politics by the Liberty party in 1840 was essentially this: Who shall control the National Government,—those who believe that slavery is right and wish to fortify, defend, and extend it, or those who believe it is wrong and wish to prevent and restrict it? Lincoln

Political
Abolitionists
in the Old
Parties

Liberty
Principles

The Abolitionists and the Liberty Party 67

recognized and defined this issue nearly twenty years later:

"We want and must have a national policy as to slavery which deals with it as being a wrong. Whoever would prevent slavery becoming national and perpetual yields all when he yields to a policy which treats it either as being right, or as being a matter of indifference. We admit that the United States Government is not charged with the duty of righting or preventing all the wrongs in the world. But the government rightfully may, and, subject to the Constitution, ought to, redress and prevent all wrongs which are wrongs to the nation itself. It is expressly charged with the duty of providing for the general welfare. We think slavery impairs and endangers the general welfare. Those who do not think this are not of us and we cannot agree with them. We must shape our own course by our own judgment."¹

This was clearly a defensible position. But there were those among the Liberty party men who went farther. In their desire to hold to the Constitution as an anti-slavery, or at least as a non-slavery, instrument, they asserted that the principles of the Declaration of Independence, by which all had the "inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," had become constitutional law. On the basis of the amendments guaranteeing the inviolability of free speech, free press, free petition, free trial by jury, and guaranteeing that "no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law," they declared that the clauses of the Constitution allowing representation for

Attitude of
the Liberty
Party toward the
Pro-Slavery
Clauses of
the Constitution

¹ Lincoln, 1859, December 3-5, *Works*, vol. i., p. 593.

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three fifths of the slaves and providing for the rendition of fugitive slaves, were anti-republican and ought to be abrogated. Whereas, they said, "we should obey God rather than man; whereas, the fugitive slave clause binds us to violate a principle of universal morality; whereas, it is a principle of common law that any contract or agreement to do an act derogatory to natural right is vitiated and annulled by its inherent immorality, we therefore give notice to the nation and the world that we regard the fugitive slave clause as 'utterly null and void and, consequently, as forming no part of the Constitution whenever we are called upon or sworn to support it.' "

This was the convenient plea by which the Liberty men proposed to abrogate that part of the Constitution which they did not like. It was the first announcement of the "higher law,"—that there was a law higher than the Constitution, and that whenever the Constitution contravened this higher moral law they would disregard the Constitution. This was of the spirit of the Garrisonians, the pure moralists. Whether this extreme position was defensible was a moral rather than a constitutional question, but it had at least the merit of candor and honesty.

While the demands and principles of the Liberty party on slavery contained more than the platform on which the anti-slavery cause was finally won, **The Character of the Liberty Party Men** the party should be given the credit of being the first to formulate the cardinal political principles, as applied to slavery, around which the great Republican party was finally gathered for victory. The Liberty men were not Garrisonians,—they had a distinct and practicable political program. Their opponents looked upon them

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as formidable antagonists, and Calhoun recognized in their course the greatest menace to the slave system. They had among them able lawyers and men of political sense and sagacity. They constantly held their party subordinate to their cause; to them party was always a means, not an end. They easily and consistently merged with the Free-Soilers in 1848 and with the Republicans in 1856. In 1844, holding the balance of power in New York State, they exercised a decisive influence in politics. Their fifteen thousand votes cast in that State for Birney were mostly withdrawn from Clay, and the result was that Polk, an avowed annexationist, carried the State by the, "lean plurality of five thousand votes" and was elected to the presidency. The Liberty men have generally been reproached for the course they then pursued.¹ They are accused of responsibility for slavery extension in permitting the annexation of Texas by causing the defeat of Clay. But it is pure assumption to assert that the course of our history with reference to Texas would have been materially different had Clay been elected instead of Polk. Mr. Rhodes expresses the judgment that Clay's election "would certainly postpone, and might defeat, the project of annexation." It does not seem to me that this conclusion is sustained by the facts in the situation. Texas was annexed under Tyler; and if it be said that Polk's election was held by Tyler as a popular mandate for that policy, it can by no means be said that Tyler would have construed Clay's election as a mandate against it. The majority of the country evidently

Was the
Liberty
Party
Responsible
for Slavery
Extension,
in 1844?

¹ Greeley says the Liberty votes were "votes thrown away on Birney," and Rhodes that a "vote for Birney was indirectly a vote for Polk."

favored annexation, the South partly on account of slavery, and a large part of the North on other accounts. The Democrats were well united on the issue and they forced the fighting. But the Whigs were not united in opposition, as Clay's apparent willingness to appear for annexation in the South, but against it in the North, clearly indicates. There is no ground for the assumption that Greeley, Giddings, Seward, and the anti-slavery Whigs of the North represented the party. Clay represented the party. The sagacity of the Liberty men can hardly be impeached for refusing to commit their cause to Clay, who had said that "personally he would be glad to see Texas annexed," and that in any case annexation ought to be considered without reference to its bearing on slavery. Certainly Clay could not have been trusted to resist annexation. The strictures on the Liberty men are made on the assumption that Clay and the Whigs were opposed to

Clay and
 Slavery
 Extension

slavery. Thurlow Weed's remark in 1860, that "the Whig party was always opposed to slavery,"¹ seems somewhat grotesque in the light of the party's record. Just when, where, or how the Whig party was opposed to slavery no historical writer has ever attempted to explain. Clay was like the Whigs whom he led,—he was in a strait betwixt two, without reliable political convictions or fixed political purposes on the subject of slavery. Some Whigs were opposed to slavery, but Clay was not one of them. He was a slaveholder who had favored slavery extension in 1820 in order to "dilute the evil." What opposition he had expressed to the annexation of Texas had no reference to the interests of the anti-slavery cause, and in the face of the first pressure that

¹ *Autobiography*, vol. ii., p. 306.

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confronted him he virtually withdrew what he had said. Clay was a "Union-Saver," one of that group of men who were at all times ready to sacrifice the freedom of the slave, or the cause of freedom in the Territories, if such a course seemed at all necessary, in order to preserve the Union. They may have *preferred* the Union without slavery, though as a rule their anti-slavery consciences were easy to satisfy. They were for justice, if possible or convenient; but, as is evident from their compromising habit, they were for peace on slavery at any price. The most sacred thing in their eyes was the "compromises of the Constitution," and all their energies were bent toward preserving the Union as it was, half slave and half free. It was evident that the slavery question could not be settled on its merits within the Union so long as panic and fear were to dominate the minds of the people at every threat of secession and dissolution. There was no limit to the concessions the "Union-saving" Whigs and Democrats would have been willing to make as the alternative of a disruption of the Union.¹ The bold Southern leaders like Calhoun saw this, and in discussing the slavery question they offered the alternative of an unconditional submission or the dissolution of the Union. The conduct of the "Union-saving" Whigs, who controlled and led the party, misled the South to believe that the North would regard no concession too great in order to avoid this extremity.² It is plain from Clay's career, and from

"Union-Savers"

¹ Rufus Choate urged that the return to slavery of fugitive slaves was an insignificant sacrifice on the altar of the Union as compared to the hecatombs to be sacrificed through civil convulsions.—Adams's *Life of C. F. Adams*, pp. 59-60.

² See Von Holst, vol. iii., pp. 315-316.

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the subsequent career of his party, that upon the subject of slavery he would have moved in the line of least resistance. Had he presumed to oppose the incoming of Texas the South had only to threaten disunion to induce him to yield.

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CHAPTER VI

THE FREE-SOILERS

THE Free-Soilers were more nearly than the Liberty men the forerunners of the Republicans. The record of the Liberty party shows clearly that the movement against slavery proceeded along two lines, moral and political. The earnest anti-slavery men in all parties, or in none, kept up the agitation, in literature and song, on the platform, in the pulpit, and in the press. The growing evils and aggressions of slavery, its arrogant spirit and its attempt to prevent discussion, came very forcibly to their aid. But mere moral appeals for abolition, or for immediate emancipation, could not arouse the people of the North—of Connecticut or Michigan, for instance—to organize themselves for the purpose of putting out the fires of slavery in Louisiana or Georgia. The Yankee in the North felt that he was not responsible for slavery in Louisiana or Georgia. But the successful movement for the annexation of Texas, followed by the Mexican War, with the certainty of increased territory, changed the aspect of the question. It then became a question not of abolition but of restriction. Men whose ears were closed to arguments for the abolition of slavery, for which they felt no responsibility and over which they had no control,

**The Free-
Soilers**

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were yet quite sensitive to pleas against the extension of slavery to the national Territories under the protection and the auspices of the national power. In 1846, in anticipation of negotiations looking to increased territory following the Mexican War, to the bill appropriating \$3,000,000 for use by the President in purchasing territory from Mexico, David Wilmot, a Democratic Representative from Pennsylvania, offered his famous proviso that neither "slavery nor involuntary servitude" should ever exist in any territory to be ceded by Mexico. This was the central principle on which the Republican party was subsequently formed. It was the principle to which the anti-slavery Whigs and anti-slavery Democrats endeavored to commit their respective parties. Failing in this, they left their parties and, sinking previous and minor differences, they merged with the Liberty men into the Free-Soil party.

The Free-Soilers who came out from the Whigs were sometimes called, especially in Massachusetts, the

"Conscience Whigs." On the subject of
"Conscience Whigs" slavery their consciences were too tender

for their party managers. They were ready to give up their party, they were even ready to see their party leaders defeated for office, rather than to swerve from a course to which their consciences im-

elled them. The "old-line" Whigs, some-
"Old-Line," times called by their opponents the "Cotton
or "Cotton Whigs" Whigs," because, as was charged, they wished

to avoid the slavery question in order not to injure the cotton trade, desired to commit the party to economic issues alone, as the best means of preserving the harmony of the Whig party and the integrity of the Union. They were for "our country however bounded," and were therefore not opposed to expansion

merely from fear that expansion might increase the slave area, and they were opposed to committing the party to the Wilmot Proviso. They were led by men like Webster, Clay, Choate, Winthrop, Corwin, and Fillmore. The "Conscience Whigs" were determined to resist at all hazard the further extension of slave territory. They were led by men like John G. Palfrey, Charles Francis Adams, John A. Andrew, Henry Wilson, Charles Sumner, E. Rockwood Hoar, R. H. Dana, George W. Julian, and Joshua R. Giddings. They objected to the spread of slavery, not only because that would tend to perpetuate and increase the slave trade and the other moral and social evils of slavery, but because such expansion would add greatly to the political power of the slaveholders. These men were determined, if possible, to commit the Whig party against slavery. Sumner wrote to Webster, beseeching him to place himself at the head of the Whig party and commit the party definitely to an anti-slavery policy,—to make it a great national party of freedom. Webster politely refused. It was for the course that Webster then pursued, subsequently voiced in his Seventh-of-March Speech, that Motley spoke of him as "that golden-headed but clay-footed image," and that Emerson wrote of him: "Mr. Webster is only following the laws of his blood and constitution. He is a man who lives by his memory; a man of the past, not a man of faith and hope." The moralist felt that the party cause of the future was to be found in positive resistance to slavery extension, and that Webster and the "old-line" Whigs were not the men for the hour.

Webster's
Conserva-
tism

In the Massachusetts Whig Convention of September 26, 1846, Sumner, speaking for the "Conscience

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Whigs," urged it as the duty of the party to give open and distinct expression against slavery, not only against its further extension but against "its longer continuance under the Constitution and laws of the Union." Winthrop replied, urging the tariff, public economy, and internal improvements, as the economic issues on which the Whigs were united to do battle. This was a representative collision, and the anti-slavery men were defeated in the making of the platform. The course that was seemingly expedient and morally indifferent had won. Upon hearing of this result, Whittier spoke in one of his *Voices of Freedom*, giving expression to the Free-Soil conscience that was impelling the disruption of the Whig party:

The Whig
Organization
vs. the Whig
Conscience

"Tell us not of Banks and Tariffs,—cease your paltry
peddler cries,—
Shall the good State sink her honor that your gambling
stocks may rise?
Would ye barter man for cotton?—that your gains may
sum up higher,
Must we kiss the feet of Moloch, pass our children through
the fire?
Is the dollar only real?—God and truth and right a dream?
Weighed against your lying ledgers must our manhood
kick the beam?

"Sons of men who sat in council with their Bibles round
the board,
Answering England's royal missive with a firm, 'Thus
saith the Lord!'
Rise again for home and freedom!—set the battle in array;
What the fathers did of old time we their sons must do
to-day."¹

¹ *The Pine-Tree.*

The poet as well as the moralist was calling for moral leadership, and the spirits of men were being stirred for moral conflict.

In spite of their defeat in Massachusetts the "Conscience Whigs" were determined to make opposition to the extension of slavery a political test in the presidential contest of 1848. They proposed to support no candidates for President and Vice-President but such as were known to oppose slavery extension. "The sacramental sanction of a regular nomination" would not suffice. "We cannot say, with detestable morality, 'Our party right or wrong.' Loyalty to principle is higher than loyalty to party."¹ When, therefore, in 1848, the Whig National Convention voted down the Wilmot Proviso, Henry Wilson announced the revolt of the anti-slavery Whigs. To these men the slavery question had now assumed an aspect not within the range of expediency and compromise. "To be wrong on this was to be wholly wrong," as Sumner expressed it.

Free-Soil
Secession
from the
Whigs

There was also resistance to Democratic acquiescence in slavery and a corresponding schism in that party. Polk's nomination and election in 1844 caused grief and disappointment to thousands of Democrats who were opposed to the annexation of Texas and to the extension of slavery. Van Buren was defeated for the party nomination in 1844 by sharp practice, because as President he had obstructed annexation, and as a candidate he had given positive expression against it. Upon his defeat for the nomination, William Cullen Bryant, David Dudley Field, and other Van Buren Democrats in New York, while loyally supporting Polk, urged the choice of Congressmen opposed to annexation.

¹ Storey's *Sumner*, p. 55.

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Silas Wright, the lieutenant and close friend of Van Buren, who had refused to accept second place with Polk, accepted his party nomination for the governorship of New York. Wright's popularity contributed materially to Polk's success in New York, though Wright ran ahead of his national ticket.

The two contending factions of the Democracy in New York became known as the "Hunkers" and the "Barnburners." The "Hunkers" were the "Hunkers" "old-line" regulars, the "slow, plodding conservatives," the supporters of annexation, those ready to combine with the Southern Democracy in order to defeat Van Buren; who relied mainly on patronage and spoils for a motive to maintain a party organization and to promote party success,—“respectable, dull men of easy consciences,” whose most marked characteristic, according to their opponents, was their *hankering* after the emoluments of office. Men of this kind were called by the anti-slavery men “Dough-Faces,” “Slavocrats,” or “Northern men with Southern principles.” Marcy and Dickinson of New York were types of leading “Hunkers,” honorable men who were unmoved by abolition noise.

When the Wilmot Proviso came up in Congress it was supported there, not only by the New York Whigs, but by all the New York Democrats, following the leadership of Van Buren. A resolution favoring the Wilmot Proviso was carried in the New York legislature by the Van Buren Democrats and the “Soft Hunkers,” the latter being less friendly to the extension of slavery than the “Hard Hunkers.” Polk, Marcy, and Dickinson, angered at the Democratic opposition in New York to the pro-slavery Mexican policy of the Administration, threw

all the weight of the Federal patronage against the Van Buren Democrats. In 1847, in the New York State Democratic Convention at Syracuse, occurred a struggle corresponding to that in the Whig Convention of Massachusetts of 1846.¹ David Dudley Field, leading the anti-slavery Democrats, proposed a resolution, that "while the Democracy of New York would faithfully adhere to the Constitution and maintain the reserved rights of the States they would still declare their uncompromising hostility to the extension of slavery into territory now free." Upon the defeat of this resolution by Hunker office-holders, the anti-slavery Democrats walked out. They resolved to cut loose from and defy the Administration and the State machine, and to appeal to the National Convention of the party. These were the "Barnburners." Their nickname came from their supposed resemblance to the Dutch farmer, who, troubled with the rats in his barn and swearing that he would be rid of them, finally resorted to the extreme expedient of burning his barn to get rid of the pestiferous rats.² They were resolved, like the Conscience Whigs, to be anti-slavery men first and party men afterwards, and to abandon their party if it were to be given over to the pest of slavery.

The New
York Barn-
burners

The Barnburners charged fraud in the defeat of their anti-slavery resolution at Syracuse, and they called a convention of their own at Herkimer to speak for the "free democracy of New York,"—"an important pre-

¹ Pp. 74-77.

² Another origin for "Barnburners" refers it to "a name borrowed from recent disturbances in Rhode Island, where the defeated Dorrites had sought revenge by burning the barns of the law and order party."—MacLaughlin's *Cass*, which cites also the *Autobiography of Thurlow Weed* and the *Whig Almanac* for 1849, p. 22.

liminary," says Mr. Shepard, "to the formation of the modern Republican party."¹ Wilmot addressed this convention. John Van Buren, the son of the ex-President, and one of the most effective political orators of the day, reported the resolutions. The fraud at Syracuse was denounced, and a call was issued for a convention on Washington's Birthday, 1848, to choose Barnburner delegates to the National Convention to contest the seats of those chosen by the Hunkers. It was declared that the freemen of New York would not submit to slavery in the conquered provinces; and that "against the threats of Southern Democrats that they would support no candidates for the presidency who did not assent to the extension of slavery, the Democrats of New York would proclaim their determination to vote for no candidate who did so assent."²

The National Democratic Convention in 1848, wishing to avoid offending either faction in New York, admitted both the Hunker and the Barnburner delegations from that State, allowing that each delegate should have half a vote, and that the seventy-two delegates should cast the thirty-six votes of the State. This did not satisfy the Barnburners, and being convinced that the Wilmot Proviso would be voted down and that a candidate favorable to slavery extension would be chosen, they withdrew from the convention. They met again in State convention at Utica in the summer of 1848, declared that the surrender of Congressional power over the Territories and the refusal to use that power to exclude slavery was not in harmony with Democratic principles, and they nominated Martin Van Buren for President and John A. Dix for Governor

¹ Shepard's *Van Buren*.

² *Ibid.*, p. 358.

of New York. Such was the anti-slavery revolt among the Democrats.

The National Free-Soil Convention, designed to unite into one party all these bolting elements, the Barnburner Democrats, the Conscience Whigs, the Liberty men, and all others who would sink past political differences in opposition to slavery extension, met at Buffalo in August, 1848. This convention may be looked upon as marking the inception of a great party.¹ "Here was, at last," says Professor Burgess, "the principle and party of the future. Those who composed it held to the Union and the Government, vindicated the national character of both, and while they denied none of the constitutional rights of the Southern Commonwealths, and none of the compromises of the Constitution with the slaveholders, yet they refused to allow the great evil under which the country suffered to spread into regions uncontaminated by it."² The Liberty party had already nominated John P. Hale for President, and the New York Barnburners, as we have seen, had nominated Van Buren. Although many of the Barnburners of New York had pushed forward Van Buren's candidacy in order to pay off their personal and party grudges against the Hunkers, and although the anti-slavery convictions of Van Buren and some of his followers were seriously questioned, especially by the Hunkers and the anti-slavery Whigs who were asked to endorse his nomination, yet

National
Free-Soil
Convention
at Buffalo,
1848

Van Buren's
Candidacy,
1848

¹ Over the platform behind the president's desk was a picture of an old barn burning under the inscription, "Let it burn for conscience' sake."

² *The Middle Period*, p. 348.

the fact that fully half the Democrats of New York State were ready to follow Van Buren's leadership against a pronounced pro-slavery Democracy seemed to present an opportunity too good to be lost, and the Free-Soilers accepted Van Buren as their presidential candidate. Hale, the Liberal party candidate, withdrew in Van Buren's favor.¹

Associated with Van Buren upon the Free-Soil ticket was Charles Francis Adams, the son of his life-long political opponent, and it seemed somewhat odd to see Jackson's first lieutenant and the son of John Quincy Adams running together in a presidential race. The combination was laughed at as inconsistent and grotesque. Old-line Whigs like Corwin, Choate, and Webster satirized Van Buren's candidacy on a Free-Soil platform. Webster, though indignant that the Whigs had taken up Taylor instead of himself, refused to desert his party for the new coalition, and said² that for "the leader of the *Free-Spoil* party to become the leader of the *Free-Soil* party was a joke to shake one's sides," and that if Van Buren and himself should meet upon

¹ President Polk desired a settlement of the slavery question in the Territories by the extension of the Missouri line to the Pacific. If this were done before the election of 1848 it would tend to neutralize the effect on the party of Van Buren's bolt, which Polk denounced as a most dangerous attempt to organize geographical parties upon the slave question. "It is more threatening to the Union than anything that has occurred since the meetings of the Hartford Convention in 1814. Mr. Van Buren's course is selfish, unpatriotic, and wholly inexcusable. The effect of this movement of the seceding and discontented Democrats will be effectually counteracted if the slave question can be settled by adopting the Missouri line as applied to Oregon, New Mexico, and Upper California at the present session of Congress."—Polk's *Diary*, cited in Sydney Webster's *Two Treaties of Paris*, pp. 81, 82.

² Scudder's *Life of Lowell*, vol. i., p. 224.

the same platform they could not look each other in the face without laughing. Anti-slavery Whigs like Seward and Greeley also refused to follow Van Buren's leadership. They still clung to the old Whig party in the belief that it was, or could still be made, an anti-slavery party, and they led most of the anti-slavery Whigs to the support of Taylor. Seward, though disappointed in the neutral silence of the Whigs as a party, reasserted his allegiance to the anti-slavery cause under whatever name, and he pledged himself to stand "for emancipation and against slavery, whether my party go with me and live or go against it and fall."¹ Seward and Greeley and the Whigs who followed them looked upon the Van Buren candidacy as insincere, and they believed that to support it was but to support a guerrilla warfare.

Seward,
Greeley,
and the
Anti-Slavery
Whigs

But whatever one may think as to the charge that there was to be found a mere play of politics in the conduct of the Van Buren faction of the New York Democrats, one may not doubt the high and earnest purpose of the great body of the Free-Soil party which spoke its deep convictions at Buffalo. They asserted that they were assembled as a "union of freemen for the sake of freedom, to secure free soil to a free people," and putting their trust in God for the triumph of their cause they planted themselves firmly "upon the national platform of freedom in opposition to the sectional platform of slavery." They resolved that slavery in the several States depended upon State laws alone, "which cannot be repealed or modified by the Federal Government, and for which laws that Government is not

Free-Soil
Platform,
1848

¹ Bancroft's *Life of Seward*, vol. i., p. 162.

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responsible. We, therefore, propose no interference by Congress with slavery within the limits of any State"; that

"Congress has no more power to make a slave than to make a king; no more power to institute or establish slavery than to institute or establish a monarchy; that it is the duty of the Federal Government to relieve itself of all responsibility for the existence or continuance of slavery wherever the Government possesses constitutional power to legislate on that subject, and it is thus responsible for its existence; that the true, the only safe means of preventing the extension of slavery into territory now free is to prohibit its extension into all such territory by an act of Congress; that we accept the issue which the Slave Power has forced upon us, and to their demand for more slave States and more slave territory our calm and final answer is: No more slave States and no more slave territory. Let the soil of our extensive domain be kept free for the hardy pioneers of our own land and the oppressed and banished of other lands seeking homes of comfort and enterprise in the new

world: There must be no more compromises with slavery; if made, they must be repealed. **Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor, Free Men**" We inscribe upon our banner, 'Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Labor, and Free Men,' [to this slogan the Republicans in 1856 added Frémont], and under it we will fight on and fight ever until a triumphant victory shall reward our exertions."¹

It will be seen from this declaration that the Liberty men could easily unite with the Free-Soilers. In essentials they were at one. When the Free-Soil statesmen declared that slavery was the concern of the States with which the Federal Government had no right to interfere in any way, they announced this, not especially

¹ Free-Soil Platform, 1848.

as an anti-slavery doctrine, but as the doctrine of the Constitution, the doctrine of both sections, of North and South alike. But, with the Free-Soilers, it followed from this that if the Federal Government had no constitutional right to abolish slavery it had no constitutional right to support it. If the people of a slave State had a right to be perfectly free from Federal interference with their "peculiar institution," the people of the free States had a right to be entirely exempt from the guilt and expense of its support through Federal agency. If Congress had no more power to abolish slavery in South Carolina than it had to abolish the free-school system in Massachusetts, then South Carolina had no more right to ask Congress for legislation supporting slavery than Massachusetts had for legislation supporting her free schools. There was complete reciprocity of rights in exemptions and burdens between the slave States and the free. The Free-Soilers were willing to allow that three-fifths of the slaves should be counted in the basis of representation in States where slavery originally existed, and that fugitive slaves should be delivered up if the free States were willing to do it under such restrictions as would safeguard the liberty of free colored persons by guaranteeing, as another clause of the Constitution enjoined, that no person should be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. Beyond these concessions to slavery they had no duty to perform. The South asserted the right to be let alone with its slavery. But this local immunity of slavery by no means involved its extension under national protection with all its social and moral evils and with its unfair increment of political power. There-

The Constitutional
Doctrine of
Non-inter-
vention
with Slavery
in the States

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fore, with the extension of national territory arose the Free-Soil determination to see that slavery should be required to remain where it was, and that it should not be allowed to spread into the new Territories to blight the prosperity and happiness of future States. The Free-Soil program, therefore, was:

- “1. Slavery should be barred from national territory by national power.
- Free-Soil** “2. There should be no more slave States.
Program “3. Slavery should be abolished in the District of Columbia.

“4. The inter-State and coastwise slave trade should be prevented.

“5. The national power should not be used in diplomatic intercourse for the protection of slave property. This was peculiar property, not property by the Constitution nor by the common law, and it was to be protected only by the laws of the State. If this “two-legged property” got away there was no obligation resting on the National Government to reclaim it.

“6. For the same reason slavery should be abolished in all the forts, arsenals, dockyards, and public buildings of the United States.

“7. They would allow the fugitive slave clause of the Constitution to become a dead letter by regarding it as a compact clause and thus leaving its enforcement to the option of the several States.”

In brief, the Free-Soilers would confine slavery and all support of it to the narrowest limits possible under the Constitution, while proposing no interference with it in the States where it existed.

This presented, at one and the same time, an unmistakable and positive expression of moral conviction as to the evils of slavery, and a definite and consistent

constitutional and political program for its extinction. But the Free-Soil program contained too many particulars and endangered too many interests to find acceptance. The constituency to which it appealed was too limited. The nation was not ready in 1848 and 1852 definitely to proclaim this policy. It proposed too great an interference with the situation, with the *status quo*. The danger of the nationalization of slavery—that the nation would become all slave—was not then seen to be imminent. The Free-Soil policy was too specific, too positive, too radical, to receive the support of the conservative anti-slavery constituency of the North. These conservatives, whose support twelve years later made possible a party agency sufficiently powerful to restrain the national dominance of slavery, held that the rendition of fugitive slaves was clearly agreed to in the constitutional compact; that slavery in the District of Columbia had been ceded to the National Government with the soil, and that abolition there without the consent of Maryland as well as of the residents of the District would seem like a breach of faith and would endanger the social peace and welfare of these adjacent States; that if a union with slave States was to be maintained, what the slave States held to be property was property under the Constitution, not only within those States where slavery existed, but without those States, as in our foreign negotiations for legal claims for slaves carried by stress of weather or mutiny to foreign ports whose laws declared them free,—especially since the slave States had surrendered all right and power to push their own claims in foreign affairs. Without such national protection there could be no claim on these States to a national allegiance.

The Conser-
vative Anti-
Slavery
Position

A few years later, under changed circumstances in which the issue of slavery extension had been pushed preponderantly to the front, the Republicans found it inexpedient as well as unnecessary to make declarations on these particular matters. But in its direction and purpose, in its underlying essentials, the Republican position was the same as that of the Free-Soilers. Each came into existence, the one the forerunner of the other, from the conviction that *slavery was wrong* and that the national power should be used in its restraint. The fact that the Republicans adopted the cardinal principle of the Free-Soilers enabled the minor party readily to merge with the greater anti-slavery army of 1856 and 1860.

The struggle over excluding slavery from the Mexican cessions, the admission of California, escaping fugitive slaves, slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia, the boundary claims of Texas,—these matters, after a controversy that seemed to threaten the continuance of the Union, were settled by compromise in 1850. This settlement was generally

accepted by the public sentiment of the country. Both parties resolved to observe it, and on the basis of it the two wings of the Democrats were reunited. The Free-Soil vote of 292,000 of 1848 fell to 152,000 in 1852, while of the 120,000 Free-Soil votes cast for Van Buren in New York in 1848, only 25,000 were reported for Hale in 1852, which shows that nearly 100,000 Democrats had gone off in that State in 1848 on other than anti-slavery opinion, or that they were reconciled to the settlement of 1850. There was, after 1850, a grim determination that slavery should be banished from

Free-Soilers
and Repub-
licans
Identical
in their
Underlying
Principle

Compromise
of 1850.
Effect on
Parties

public discussion. On the adjournment of Congress in 1850 Douglas is reported to have gone to his home in Illinois declaring that he never expected to make another speech on the subject of slavery. "This determination," says Hay and Nicolay's *Life of Lincoln*, "was echoed and re-echoed, affirmed and re-affirmed by the recognized organs of the public voice, from the village newspaper to the presidential message, from the country debating school to the measured utterances of Senatorial discussion." Sumner found it difficult to get an opportunity to speak on the Fugitive Slave Law in the United States Senate in 1852, and he compared the determination to make final the laws of 1850 to the proposition of the Greek lawgiver, who, in order to secure the permanency of his laws, proposed that a halter should be placed around the neck of any citizen who suggested repeal, with the understanding that he should be drawn if his proposition failed.

The
"Finality"
of the
Legislation
of 1850

The Free-Soilers who felt that unsettled questions have no pity for the repose of nations and that a question is never settled until it is settled right, were far from thinking that the slavery question was settled; they refused to recognize the settlement of 1850 as final. They were as determined to continue the agitation as the majority were to suppress it. They concentrated their opposition chiefly on the Fugitive Slave Law, which was to them the utmost abomination. Sumner said in the Senate:

"On the subject which for years has agitated the public mind, which yet palpitates in every heart and burns on every tongue, which in its immeasurable importance dwarfs all other subjects, which by its constant and gigantic

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presence throws a shadow across these halls, they impose the rule of silence. . . . This challenges the very discussion it pretends to forbid. Debate, inquiry, discussion, are the necessary consequence. Silence becomes impossible. Slavery, which you profess to banish from public attention, openly by your invitation enters every political meeting and every political convention. The discussion of slavery will proceed wherever two or three are gathered together,—by the fireside, on the highway, at the public meeting, in the Church. The movement against slavery is from the Everlasting Arm. Even now it is gathering its forces, soon to be confessed everywhere. It may not be felt yet in the high places of office and power, but all who can put their ear humbly to the ground will hear and comprehend its incessant and advancing tread.”¹

The Free-Soilers called those who endeavored entirely to hush the slavery agitation “Finality Men.” One of their newspaper epigrams expressed their feeling of certainty that the slavery question would soon come up again:

“To kill twice dead a rattlesnake
And off his scaly skin to take
And through his head to drive a stake
And every bone within him break
And of his flesh mince-meat to make;
To burn, to sear, to boil, to bake,
Then in a heap the whole to rake,
And over it the besom shake,
And sink it fathoms in the lake,
Whence after all quite wide awake
Comes back that very same old snake.”

¹ Johnston and Woodburn's *American Political Orations*, vol. ii., p. 279.

Again we are led to see that it was the course of events rather than the conscious purpose of man that determined the course and fate of parties. Neither the determination of the Abolitionists and the Free-Soilers that the country should have no rest on the subject of slavery, nor the determination of the "Finality Men" that peace should be had even at the expense of repression, determined the outcome. It was rather the unexpected aggressions of slavery and the events to which these aggressions led that brought on another crisis and the final struggle. It was the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the promise in 1854 by the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, that called into existence a National party that was destined to resist successfully the extension of slavery. It was the striking down of that historic landmark, that barrier that had stood for a generation against the extension of slavery to the great West, that brought into existence the new Republican party whose first great office it was to save Kansas and Nebraska and thereby to save the nation from the dominance of the slave power.

Repeal of
the Missouri
Compromise
and the
Origin of the
Republicans

7/23

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CHAPTER VII

THE NEW REPUBLICAN PARTY, 1856-1876

THE Whig period in our party history closed with the disappearance of the Whig party in 1856. Soon after its disastrous defeat in 1852 came the dominance of the slavery issue and the temporary excitement of the "Know-Nothing" movement. The Whig organization was dissolved and its membership was dissipated, some Whigs becoming "Know-Nothings" or "Americans," some Republicans, and some falling back into the constitutional conservatism of the Democratic fold.

The next, and fourth, distinct period in our party history is that from 1856 to 1876, from the first national contest of the modern Republican party to the close of the Reconstruction period. The period of these two decades covers the final struggle against the extension of slavery; the threatened nationalization of slavery by the Dred Scott decision; the secession movement; the war for the preservation of the Union; the reconstruction of the divided States; the financial issues growing out of the war; and the attempt to adjust and protect by national power the civil and political rights of the freedmen.

The new party had its origin in 1854 and it was

organized primarily for the purpose of resisting the extension of American slavery. The event that led to its appearing in the field of politics, as has been indicated, was the repeal in 1854 of the slavery restriction in the Missouri Compromise of 1820,—a repealing act which struck down the famous line of $36^{\circ} 30'$, north of which in the Louisiana Purchase slavery was to be forever prohibited. This repeal opened up the heart of the continent to the entrance of slavery, and, judged from its political consequences it may be deemed one of the most momentous acts in American legislative history. It disturbed the repose on the slavery question which had been so anxiously sought and eagerly welcomed in the Compromises of 1850; it made slavery and its restriction the dominant issue in American politics until the final settlement of the vexed question by emancipation and war; it led directly to a break-up and reorganization of parties,—to the disappearance of the Whig party, to a new division within the Democratic party, and to the rise of this new party which was destined to govern the country for a half century to come. Thus the repealing act of '54 marks a distinguished epoch in American party history.

In urging this repeal, Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, the famous Democratic leader and author of the act, claimed to stand on the principle of the compromise legislation of 1850. In this legislation the principle of non-intervention was applied to the territories acquired from Mexico. It was now announced by Douglas that this principle of 1850 was intended not only for application to the Territories then under discussion (New Mexico and Utah), but for application

Douglas's
Doctrine of
Supersedure

in all subsequent organization of Territories. The principle of 1850 (non-intervention) had superseded the principle of 1820 (prohibition), and Douglas now boldly declared that he was but carrying out the spirit of the greater and later compromise which the country had so generally accepted as final.

But the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, as well as the doctrine of the adroit politician who sought to defend that repeal, was a startling surprise to the country. It aroused again the independent anti-slavery Democracy. The repealing act was denounced as a violation of "the sacred compact which was regarded by the common consent of the American people" as consecrating the Northwest Territory to freedom. "For more than thirty years,—during more than half the period of our national Constitution,—this compact [the Missouri Compromise] had been universally regarded and acted upon as inviolable American law." It was now repealed; and the freemen of all parties were called upon to resist. The "Independent Democrats" arraigned this bill as "a gross violation of a sacred pledge; as a criminal betrayal of precious rights; as part and parcel of an atrocious plot to exclude from a vast unoccupied region immigrants from the Old World and free laborers from our States." The people were called on to rally in an effort to save the great West from being converted into "a dreary region of despotism, inhabited by masters and slaves."¹ The repeal of the Missouri Compromise placed freedom and slavery face to face for the final grapple.

The elements to be united in the new party now

¹ Address of Independent Democrats, Schucker's *Life of Chase*, American History Leaflets.

called into being to commit the nation to freedom were:

(a) The greater part of the Northern Whigs, whose representatives had voted solidly in Congress against the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.

(b) The Anti-Nebraska Democrats,—the anti-slavery men of the Democratic party who were resisting again, like the former Barnburners, the opening of new territory to slavery. Nearly half of the Democratic Representatives from the North had voted against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

(c) The Free-Soilers, both of Democratic and Whig antecedents.

Of the elements thus proposing to enter into combination it is probable that the Whigs were the most numerous. Many anti-slavery Whigs contended that it was not necessary for them to give up the Whig name and organization, but that the anti-slavery work to be done should be committed to that party. But it was not in keeping with historical and practical politics for the Anti-Nebraska Democrats and Free-Soilers to become Whigs, because, in the first place, the Southern Whigs were about as pro-slavery as the Democrats, and this would tend to deter the new party from any decisive or continuous policy against slavery; in the second place, many of the "Old-Line" conservative "Silver Gray" Whigs of the North, like Granger and Fillmore, and Winthrop and Rufus Choate, and their kind, were about as much opposed to the abolition Anti-slavery agitation in the North as to the pro-slavery propaganda in the South, a temper which led many of these reactionary Whigs into the Democratic party when the lines were finally drawn; and, in the third

Constituent
Elements
of the
Republicans

place, the anti-Nebraska Democrats and the old "Barnburners" among the Free-Soilers were not willing to rally under the Whig banner, as they had a deep-seated distrust of the Whig party on the subject of slavery and were distinctly anti-Whig on the old issues. The Republican party, therefore, represents a new party, a union of all elements under a new organization and a new name who were prepared to sink all previous differences on the historic politico-economic issues—banks, tariffs, internal improvements, executive veto, constitutional construction, etc.,—that had been dividing Whigs and Democrats since Jackson's day, and who were ready to unite under the one bond and tenet of their political faith,—*no further extension of slavery*.

The new party fell back to the old and honored name of *Republican*, the name which had been preferred

The Republican Name	and approved by Jefferson for the party which he founded, and the new anti-slavery restrictionists now called upon the nation to walk again in the path of the Republican Fathers, in the path marked out by Jefferson, the original Free-Soiler, who, with other Republicans of his day, had so persistently striven to prevent the extension of slavery to Western territory,—an attempt that had won such notable success in the immortal Ordinance of 1787.¹
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¹ The name *Republican* was very frequently used to designate the old Democratic party of Jefferson and Jackson to within a decade of the time of which we write. So it now seemed to the Democratic-Republican adherents of the party of Buchanan, Cass, Marcy, and Douglas that the new radical anti-slavery party was stealing their party name; and since the dominant characteristic of the new Republican party was its opposition to slavery, its opponents, especially those of the South, always dubbed it the "Black Republican" party,—as if it were hopelessly and dangerously tarnished with the pitch of hated Abolitionism.

The new party sprang from spontaneous movements among the people. The first meeting on record looking to its organization was one held in Ripon, Wisconsin, in February, 1854, led by E. A. Bovay, while the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was still pending. Whigs, Democrats, and Free-Soilers coöperated in this meeting and they proclaimed themselves ready, if the Kansas-Nebraska Bill should be passed "to throw old party organizations to the winds and organize a new party on the sole issue of the non-extension of slavery."¹ This was a local meeting prompted not by political managers from a distance but among the people themselves. It was similar to many held in the spring and summer of 1854 in different parts of the country. The most notable of these meetings and the one whose anniversary is celebrated as the beginning of the party was that held "under the oaks" at Jackson, Michigan, July 6, 1854. This was a State-wide, representative mass-meeting acting as a state convention, though with no regularly accredited delegates. The "call" was signed by several thousand citizens of Michigan, inviting all to attend who were "ready to sink all other political differences and unite to oppose the extension of slavery." This convention, under the leadership of Jacob M. Howard and Zachariah Chandler, nominated a State ticket which carried Michigan in that year.

Origins
and Early
Organiza-
tion of the
Republicans

The popularity of its cause—"no slavery outside of the slave States"—led to a rapid growth of the new party. In the first year of its existence it carried a popular majority in nearly half of the States, elected

¹ The name *Republican* was suggested by Bovay in correspondence with Horace Greeley.

a number of United States Senators, and a Congress was elected whose plurality, though composed of diverse elements—Republicans, Anti-Nebraska Democrats, anti-slavery Whigs, and Know-Nothings,—elected a Republican Speaker.¹ In 1855 Salmon P. Chase was elected as a Republican Governor of Ohio, and in the same year the New York Whigs who had been reluctant to abandon their old party now definitely committed themselves to the new.²

In the beginnings of the party, town, county, and state meetings and local campaigns came first; proposals for party organization from a Federal centre followed. In June, 1855, and January, 1856, a Republican "Club" or "Association" in Washington City, with Lewis Clephane as Secretary, sent out circulars urging further organization of Clubs "in every city, town, and village in the Union." The State and local organizations that had been effected by this time became the basis for the call of the first "general convention," of the party. The "call" was issued by the chairmen of nine Republican State Committees³ and the first national convention of the party was held at Pittsburg, February 22, 1856. This was not a nominating convention, made

¹ This was Nathaniel P. Banks, of Massachusetts, who had been a Democrat, but was elected to Congress in 1854 as a "Know-Nothing." In the period of more than a year between his election and the organization of the House he renounced "Know-Nothingism" and declared himself for the Republican principle of Congressional prohibition of slavery in the territories. Banks may, therefore, be deemed the first Republican Speaker. The Democrats were unable to regain control of the House and elect another Speaker for a period of twenty years, when Michael C. Kerr, of Indiana, was elected.

² See Seward's *Albany Speech*, 1855.

³ Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin.

The New Republican Party, 1856-1876 99

up of regularly accredited delegates from constituent assemblies in the States, but was more in the nature of a mass convention for conference and further organization and was made up of all who cared to come and volunteer for service. However, delegates, or representatives, of the party were present from twenty-three States, and Francis P. Blair, Sr., an old Jacksonian Democrat and personal friend of Jackson, was made president of the convention. Henry J. Raymond, editor of the *New York Times*, wrote and read the address which the conference issued to the country, protesting against "the introduction of slavery into territory once consecrated to freedom." George W. Julian, of Indiana, as chairman of the committee on organization, reported a plan for a National Executive Committee and for a National Nominating Convention. Hon. E. D. Morgan, of New York, became the first chairman of this National Committee, and in harmony with instructions, a convention was subsequently called to meet in Philadelphia, June 17, 1856.¹ This Philadelphia convention nominated Frémont and Dayton as a presidential ticket, and in its first national campaign the new party polled over 1,300,000 votes and carried all the free States except Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, California, and Indiana.

The transition from the old parties to the new was made easier, in some instances, by the rise of the "Know-Nothings" in 1854 and 1855,—a secret political movement of native Americans in opposition to foreigners and the Roman Catholic Church. The members of this party

¹ It will be noted that new parties are fond of calling their conventions to meet on national anniversaries. Washington's birthday and the day of Bunker Hill were thus honored by the early Republicans.

were pledged to *know nothing* of the doings in the secret lodges and conventions of the party when inquired of by any outsider. "Americans should rule America,"—this was the fundamental doctrine of the Know-Nothings. "Put none but Americans on guard to-night"—a command of Washington in the midst of threatening dangers—was a motto of the Revolution now adapted to their uses by this new party of anti-alienism. The movement spread rapidly and carried local elections in some of the States, both North and South. It served to detach men from old party loyalties and traditions, and many Whigs and Democrats and some Free-Soilers passed through this channel to become Republicans.

Like the Free-Soilers, the new party proposed to observe all the constitutional guarantees, and it therefore proposed no interference with slavery where it existed. The party resolved that under the Constitution Congress had sovereign power over the Territories; and that "in the exercise of this power it is both the right and duty of Congress to prohibit in the Territories those twin relics of barbarism, polygamy, and slavery"; that

**Republican
Platform
of 1856**

"as our Republican Fathers, when they had abolished slavery in all our national territory, ordained that no person should be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, it becomes our duty to maintain this provision of the Constitution against all attempts to violate it for the purpose of establishing slavery in the United States by positive legislation prohibiting its existence or extension therein; that we deny the authority of Congress, of a Territorial legislature, of any individual or association of individuals, to give legal existence to slavery in any Terri-

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tory of the United States while the present Constitution shall be maintained.”¹

Thus by the reorganization of parties and the rise of the Republicans in 1856, the lines were drawn for the final conflicts over slavery. Though the Dred Scott decision of 1857 came to the aid of the aggressive movement for the nationalization of slavery, by declaring that the primary purpose of the Republican party, the political policy for which the party was born, was unconstitutional, and that Congress had no power to exclude slavery from the Territories as the Republicans proposed, yet it was found in this instance, as in most others, that political purposes and programs are not much changed or affected by judicial deliverances. The Republicans, led by Lincoln and Trumbull, Seward, Chase, Morton, Wade, Fessenden, Colfax, Sumner, Greeley, Wilson, Collamer, and other powerful leaders, —lawyers, journalists, statesmen, and reformers, imbued with moral purpose and power, pursued unswervingly the policy that had called the party into being. In great historic speeches Lincoln and Seward defined the dominant issue then confronting the nation:

“A house divided against itself cannot stand. This Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. The Union will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South.”²

Lincoln
and Seward
Define the
Issue before
the Nation
from the
Republican
Point of
View

“These antagonistic systems (the slave labor

¹ Republican Platform, 1856.

² Lincoln, June 16, 1858

system and the free labor system) are continually coming into closer contact, and collision results. Shall I tell you what this collision means? They who think that it is accidental, unnecessary, the work of interested or fanatical agitators, and therefore ephemeral, mistake the case altogether. It is an *irrepressible conflict* between enduring and opposing forces, and it means that the United States will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slaveholding nation, or entirely a free-labor nation. Either the cotton and rice-fields of South Carolina and the sugar plantations of Louisiana will ultimately be tilled by free labor, and Charleston and New Orleans become marts of legitimate merchandise alone, or else the rye-fields and wheat-fields of Massachusetts and New York must again be surrendered by their farmers to slave culture and to the production of slaves; and Boston and New York become once more markets for trade in the bodies and souls of men."¹

Such, in the period of Buchanan's administration, following the announcement of the Dred Scott decision, was the form in which the great Republican leaders presented to the nation the pressing issue in American politics.

To meet the aggressive and vigorous young Republican party, with its able leaders, the Democracy was not able to present a united front. Repeatedly has the Democratic party been unable to hold its traditional forces together, and in 1857 it was on the eve of one of the most serious schisms in its history. The Southern wing of the party demanded national protection to slave property in all the Territories. This was inconsistent with Douglas's doctrine of "popular sovereignty," which insisted upon the right of the people of a Terri-

¹ Seward, October 25, 1858, *Works*; Johnston and Woodburn's *Orations*, vol. iii., p. 201.

tory to exclude slavery if they chose. Buchanan committed his administration, under the influence of Southern leaders, to a pro-slavery policy in Kansas, and urged the admission of that Territory as a State under the Lecompton Constitution without giving the people of the Territory a fair opportunity to reject the Lecompton government. The policy was without justification or defense, not only in the view of all anti-slavery men, but also of all Northern Democrats who believed that the people of a Territory should have the right to determine upon their own domestic institutions in their own way. Douglas, while declaring that he cared not "whether slavery was voted up or voted down," denounced the Lecompton scheme and defied his party administration. Buchanan warned Douglas of the fate of Democratic leaders who dared to resist an administration of their own making,—their fate was to be crushed as Jackson had crushed Tallmadge and Rives. Douglas retorted that Buchanan would do well to remember that Andrew Jackson was dead! Douglas, in the Senate, spokesman and leader of the Northern Democracy, stood up stoutly against the Lecompton fraud. He knew that if the Lecompton constitution were submitted to a fair vote of the people of Kansas it would be voted down by an overwhelming majority. He stood for the right of the State to have the constitution that it wanted. "If Kansas wants a slave-State constitution she has a right to it; if she wants a free-State constitution she has a right to it. It is none of my business which way the slavery clause is decided."¹

Douglas
and the
Lecompton
Question

¹ "I care not whether slavery be voted up or voted down,"—this was the declaration Douglas was constantly reiterating. To the evils

Although Douglas's position by no means satisfied the South, he was far from coming to the Republican position. There was as sharp an issue, and one fundamentally more important, between Douglas and Lincoln as between Douglas and Buchanan. Douglas proclaimed his support of the Dred Scott decision, which asserted that Congress could not bar slavery from the Territories. If Congress could not do this it would seem that a creature of Congress, the Territorial legislature, could not do so. In the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates, Lincoln forced Douglas to answer whether the people of a Territory could exclude slavery from its limits prior to the formation of a State constitution. If Douglas said that they could not, he must abandon his cherished doctrine of popular sovereignty and he would probably lose the senatorship. If he said they could, he would offend the South and rend the Democratic party. In answer to Lincoln's inquiry Douglas propounded at Freeport his famous doctrine of "unfriendly legislation": That the people of a Territory

"have the lawful means to introduce or exclude slavery as they please, for the reason that slavery cannot exist a day or an hour anywhere unless it is supported by local police regulations. If the people are opposed to slavery they will

of slavery and to the spread of slavery he was indifferent, or he thought it none of his or of the nation's business. All he would fight for was the right of the Territorial people to vote on that. He thought this platform would hold his party together and enable it to retain place and power. There were positive forces on either side of him, vital with conviction. It has been urged that Douglas's willingness to allow that the nation should be morally indifferent in the face of such a tremendous moral issue is sufficient to deny him the title of a national statesman.

elect representatives to their Territorial legislature who will by unfriendly legislation effectually prevent the introduction of it into their midst. If on the contrary they are for it, their legislation will favor its extension. Hence, no matter what the decision of the Supreme Court may be on that abstract question, still the right of the people to make a slave Territory or a free Territory is perfect and complete under the Nebraska Bill.”

Douglas's
“Freeport
Doctrine” of
“Unfriendly
Legislation”

Such was Douglas's effort to support both the Supreme Court decision and the theory of popular sovereignty. The two were not reconcilable, except by some process of political legerdemain. Lincoln, denying the validity of the Dred Scott decision, and representing the Northern Republicans on the one hand, met this equivocal position of Douglas by the positive demand that national power should prohibit slavery from the Territories. He urged the people to elect to power a party of men who *did care* about the right or wrong of slavery. On the other side of Douglas and equally opposed to him were leaders like Jefferson Davis holding to the Dred Scott decision and representing the Southern Democracy. They met the Douglas position with an equally positive demand that the National Government should protect slavery in the Territories. Douglas's answer to Lincoln enabled him to carry the senatorship of Illinois, but it was fatal to his hopes of Southern support for the presidency. His Lecompton policy and his “Freeport doctrine” were a mortal offense to the slave power, and Southern leaders gave notice in Congress that no such Democratic doctrine and leadership would be accepted by the South. A widening breach between the two sections of the Democracy was inevitable. As between the leaders

of the radical pro-slavery Democrats of the South, led by Davis and men of his type, and the anti-slavery Republican party of the North, Lincoln very well defined the fundamental underlying issue to be the right and wrong of slavery,—between those who thought that slavery was right and ought to be extended and those who thought that slavery was wrong and ought to be restricted.

It was in the first part of this period, the formative period of the Republican party, that the three proposed policies of the nation toward slavery in the Territories were formulated which resulted in the division of the Democratic party which we have described. This resulted in the triumph of the Republicans by the first election of Lincoln. These policies were submitted to the people in 1860 for final adjudication in the most notable, if not the most important, campaign in American political history.

Summary Re-State- ment of the Three Platforms on Slavery and the Territories in 1860	(1) <i>The Republicans under Lincoln</i> asserted that the national power should bar slavery from the national territory. Slavery existed only by State law. There was no law for it in the Territories. Congress could establish slavery nowhere, but was bound to prohibit and exclude it from all Federal territory.
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Summary Re-State- ment of the Three Platforms on Slavery and the Territories in 1860	(2) <i>The Southern Democrats under Breckinridge</i> asserted that national power should protect slavery in the national territory. The citizen of any State had a right to migrate to any Territory, taking with him anything that was property by the law of his own State, and Congress was bound to render protection to such property, wherever necessary, with or without the coöperation of the Territorial legislature.
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(3) *The Northern Democrats under Douglas* asserted the doctrine of popular sovereignty, of non-interference; that slavery or no slavery in any Territory was entirely the affair of the white inhabitants of such Territory. If they chose to have it, it was their right; if they chose not to have it, they had a right to exclude or prohibit it. Neither Congress nor the people of the Union had any right to interfere.¹

One wing of the Democracy represented a sectional interest and a section of States. The other, though carrying fewer States, was more national in character and represented a larger mass of Democratic voters. Lincoln carried all the free States and was elected. Douglas carried but the single State of Missouri,² though in the popular vote he exceeded Breckinridge by more than a half-million votes.

The Republican position in 1860 was moderate and conservative, though the party was denounced as "radical," "sectional," "anarchical," "unconstitutional," and "destructive of the peace and union" of the country. It adhered loyally to the *union* of the States and the *rights* of the States, and among these rights the party included "the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions in its own way"; and with John Brown's raid in mind, the platform denounced "the lawless invasion by armed

¹ Greeley's *American Conflict*, vol. i., p. 322.

The "Constitutional Union" party also appeared in the contest of 1860 (see p. 50). The party declared only for "the constitution, the Union, and the enforcement of the laws." It wished the country to avoid, or suppress, the troublesome slavery agitation and seek conciliation and union between the sections. Mr. Schouler has compared the attitude of this party to that of passengers at sea who in the midst of a violent storm meet together in the cabin and declare for fair weather.

² He received also three electoral votes from New Jersey.

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force of the soil of any State or Territory." The party was bold enough and radical enough, under the eloquent pleas of Joshua R. Giddings and George William Curtis, to stand by the immortal emancipating principles of the Declaration of Independence,—the equality of all men before the law in their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and in the campaign their bold anti-slavery spirits made no concealment of their purpose to use all the legitimate powers of the National Government to bring it to pass that all men everywhere might be free. The spirit of the party was anti-slavery. Its purpose was to girdle the tree of slavery and let it die; so to restrict the ignoble institution that it would be placed "in the course of ultimate extinction." In this alone was its offending. This was the sectional radicalism of the Republican party which the apologists of privilege and of the slave power denounced and feared. The party of Lincoln stood for the spirit of an ever-struggling and advancing democracy, and the time had come in a new era of democratic progress when the nation was ready to commit its government to a party of men who were renewing their pledges of devotion to the basic principle of the nation's origin.

With Lincoln's election the country was plunged into the issues of secession and war. Lincoln, though having no intention of interfering with slavery in the slave States and believing that he had no constitutional power to do so, yet stood stoutly, in the face of wavering compromise, for the principle on which his party had been elected to power—no further extension of slavery. He said to yield it now and to allow slavery more territory would mean merely that the whole long struggle would have to be gone through with again. Lincoln's

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paramount purpose in the war, as President and party leader, was to save the Union.¹ He was pressed on two sides. 1. On the one hand were the *Radicals*,—the stout, uncompromising anti-slavery men, like Chase in the Cabinet; Stevens, Julian, and Lovejoy in the House; Sumner, Wilson, Wade, and others in the Senate, who wished on all occasions to strike at slavery. They urged confiscation and military emancipation not only as a means of subduing the Confederacy, but as an end most desirable in itself. To effect their anti-slavery ends they would construe the constitution broadly or set it aside in operations against Confederate belligerents; and while they would prosecute the war for the Union vigorously at all times they were determined that the restored Union should be *all free*, and they proposed to see to it, as Stevens said, that “the foot of a slave should never again tread the soil of the Republic.” This contingent within the Republican party criticised Lincoln for his slowness in adopting a vigorous anti-slavery policy; they condemned his tender regard for border-State, pro-slavery opinion and some of them hoped to defeat Lincoln for renomination and displace him with Chase; while the more persistent and radical among them went so far as to nominate General Frémont for the presidency in a convention at Cleveland, in 1864.²

2. On the other hand were the “Peace Democrats.” These were disposed to be more conciliatory toward secession, more lenient to the seceded States, more careful of the rights of the States, and more watchful

¹ See his famous letter to Horace Greeley in answer to Greeley’s “Prayer of Twenty Millions.”

² The Radical Ticket was withdrawn and the “Union Republicans” were united in support of Lincoln before the fall election.

of the rights of the individual citizen, more jealous and resistant toward the extension of executive and national authority. With but little regard to the moral aspects of slavery, they resisted the war wherein they thought it was intended to work emancipation. They were opposed to an "Abolition war." They were conservatives,—moderate men who wanted to conciliate the South, stop war and strife, restore peace and order, and save the Union of the Fathers as it was. Oblivious of the moral progress of the world as to slavery, they execrated the radical extremists on both sides. To their minds the "Abolition fanatics" and the Southern "fire-eaters" were equally responsible for secession and war; war had come about from placing these radical extremists in power in the two sections.

The "War Democrats," a wing of the party in the North, loyally supported the war for the Union in all legitimate directions. But another wing of the Northern Democracy—in some States a dominant wing—denounced the war vigorously in all its stages, and, like forces firing in the rear, did much to harass Mr. Lincoln's administration. They called the soldiers "Lincoln's hirelings"; they encouraged desertion; they resisted the draft; they rejoiced at Southern victories, and their public meetings, resolutions, and speeches were like aid and comfort to the enemy; and finally, in national convention in 1864, led by Vallandigham of Ohio, their voices and votes controlled the party and led it to demand an immediate cessation of hostilities "after four years of failure to restore the Union by the experiment of war." The Northern temper was intolerant in the heat of civil strife of this factious opposition to the war, and these Democrats were called

"Traitors," "Butternuts," and "Copperheads," indicative of their neutral shade, or their positive opposition to their country, or their treacherous and venomous conduct. As always in war, the party in power tended largely toward the suppression of such free discussion as might be calculated to give comfort to the enemy; those in opposition to the administration were oftentimes deprived of the usual civil rights enjoyed in ordinary times. Many Democrats held that the Union could never be "pinned together by bayonets," and that a Union under such coercion would not be worth the having. This opposition to the war caused many "War Democrats" to join the Republicans, and it made it difficult for the Democrats to gain support in the North on the issues of reconstruction and finance growing out of the war. For nearly a generation, the Democratic party suffered damage in public estimation at the North on account of its attitude during the war.

Between the two contending and antagonistic forces, the "Peace Democrats" and the radical anti-slavery men, Lincoln had to steer his course. It was in this and in not advancing faster than public opinion would sustain him that he achieved his great success. He kept before him the integrity of the Union as "the primary object of the war," and by the close of 1863, having adopted emancipation as a means to the end, he advised Congress to make freedom for the slave a finality for peace as well as for war by a constitutional amendment, abolishing slavery forever within the jurisdiction of the United States. The Republicans in their national convention of 1864 declared for this policy and, denouncing slavery as "the cause and strength of the rebellion," they asserted that "justice and national safety demanded its utter and complete extirpation

from the soil of the Republic." Lincoln, standing for reelection, was now accused of being unwilling to save the Union unless he could also destroy slavery, and he was denounced by the "Peace Democrats" for refusing to negotiate on the basis of the old "Union as it was." Public sentiment now deemed it too late for reunion on that basis, and the Republicans, in the campaign of 1864, presented to the country as the vital issue of the hour the vigorous prosecution of the war as the only means of saving the Union. For the sake of rallying all elements to the support of the Union, the party was ready to abandon its name, and the Republicans called themselves in 1864 the "National Union Party,"¹ To emphasize still further their national-union spirit and to avoid a sectional appearance the party refused Vice-President Hamlin, of Maine, a renomination and took up in his stead Andrew Johnson of Tennessee,—a mistake that caused the party regret and trouble in later years.²

At the close of the war the Republican party gained the prestige that follows success. Secession had been killed, the rebellion crushed, slavery destroyed, the

¹ It has been claimed that the Republican party in this campaign was a different party from the one that elected Lincoln in 1860. It is true it held a different name, it appealed to the country in a different issue, and it had a different constituent membership, but all this happens frequently in history without breaking the historical continuity in the life of a party. See Prof. W. A. Dunning in the *American Historical Review* for Oct., 1910, vol. xvi., on "The Second Birth of the Republican Party."

² Johnson had been a States-rights Democrat before the war, but he had stood up stoutly for the Union in the face of the secession of his State, refused to leave the U. S. Senate, and he was in 1864 the Military Governor of Tennessee. When his nomination for Vice-President was proposed, Thaddeus Stevens protested, asking Colonel McClure why he wished "to go down to one of those damned rebel provinces for a Vice-President."

Union saved. The party was quick to take to itself the credit for these notable results of the war. In Reconstruction, after the assassination of Lincoln and the accession of Johnson, a fierce quarrel arose between the President and the Republican Congress. Johnson, looking upon Reconstruction as entirely an Executive problem, set up new state governments in the South by the exercise of his military authority. These he required to repudiate secession, slavery, and the Confederate debt, and then offered these States to Congress as reconstructed States, ready for restoration, leaving Congress nothing to do but to decide whether their Senators and Representatives elect had the constitutional qualifications required of members of Congress. The Congressional leaders demanded the right to take part in the great national problem of restoring the Union, and they contended that certain guarantees of the results of the war should be written into the fundamental law of the land. They repudiated Johnson and his policy and appealed to the country on the guarantees of the Fourteenth Amendment, citizenship for the negro, equal civil rights for all, a fair readjustment of political power, repudiation of the Confederate debt, guarantee of the Federal debt, and the exclusion from office in State and Nation, subject to the consent of Congress, of all who having taken an oath to support the Constitution had afterwards gone into the Rebellion. The congressional reconstruction policy of the Republicans, led by radicals like Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner, had for its policy the vesting of political power in the South in the hands of negroes, or proportionately divesting Southern whites of such power, to the end that the reunion of the Northern and Southern wings of the Democratic party would not be able to restore

that party to power. The Democrats, North and South, came to the support of the President's policy and the Southern Democrats, now including nearly all the respectable white men of that section, naturally looked to their Democratic friends in the North for relief from the hard reconstruction measures of Congress. A contingent of Johnson Republicans also supported the President; Seward, Welles, and McCulloch in the Cabinet; Doolittle and Cowan in the Senate; and Henry J. Raymond in the House.

In the contest before the country between the Presidential and Congressional parties and plans for reconstruction in 1866 the Congressional leaders were overwhelmingly sustained.¹ Military reconstruction, negro suffrage in the South, and the Fifteenth Amendment followed. The Republican party in the South came to be made up chiefly of negroes, "scalawags," and "carpet-baggers,"² and there ensued bitter political contests and race antagonisms accompanied by violence and electoral frauds on the part of the Southern whites that led to a "Solid South" against the Republican party for a half a century in party history.

¹ In this campaign the Congressional Campaign Committee was used for the first time. The Johnson Republicans, with Henry J. Raymond as chairman of the National Committee, had control of the machinery of the party, and the Radical Republican leaders in Congress found it necessary to organize a committee to attend to the election contests in the Congressional districts. This part of the party machinery has been retained ever since and has become an important part of the working organization in every contest for the control of the Congress. It is now generally made up of a party Representative or Senator from each of the States.

² A "scalawag" was a Southern white who became a Republican, thus abandoning and betraying his race and section. A "carpet-bagger" was a Northern Republican who settled in the South after the war, whose worldly goods, as alleged, he could readily carry in a carpet bag.

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Under President Grant (1869-1877) the Republican party suffered a marked decline in popular support. The Republicans triumphantly reelected Grant in 1872, chiefly because of division among their opponents and the weakness of Horace Greeley as an opposition candidate. But the party suffered from the Liberal Republican schism of that year,¹ and largely because of the financial panic of 1873 it lost the control of the House in 1874. The excesses of the war-tariff; the political corruption of the Spoils system; the autocratic control by a Senatorial coterie of party power and patronage; numerous administrative scandals and abuses,—these brought the party to the verge of defeat in 1876. Reform was necessary and the reunited Democratic party, with the Southern States all restored to participation in the election, presented Governor Tilden, of New York, and Governor Hendricks, of Indiana, as their presidential ticket upon the issue of universal reform. The Republicans still held control of Returning Boards in three of the Southern States and the Democrats charged that it was only by their boldness and fraud that Tilden was counted out and deprived of the high office to which he had been elected by the suffrages of the people in 1876.

With the final withdrawal of national troops from the Southern States by President Hayes in 1877, the period of Reconstruction may be said to have come to an end. The issues growing out of slavery, secession, and the Civil War may be said to have been settled and the country entered upon another period in its party history.

¹ See pp. 249-251.

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CHAPTER VIII

REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS, 1876-1896: RISING INDUSTRIAL PROTESTS

THE twenty years from 1876 to 1896 appear to mark another distinct period in party history. After 1876 the "Southern question," including topics relating to slavery, the negro, the war, and reconstruction, no longer dominated politics. As effective issues these subjects were eliminated. The original mission of the Republican party had been accomplished, and on the new and leading topics of the times its supporters were not clearly differentiated from their opponents. President Hayes's administration was clean and upright. Through the influence and leadership of William M. Evarts, his Secretary of State, John Sherman, his Secretary of the Treasury, and Carl Schurz, his Secretary of the Interior, the Hayes administration resisted silver inflation and held the country to specie resumption and the specie standard; it advanced the cause of civil service reform; it promoted further conciliation between the North and the South and it helped to promote a Republican revival that enabled the party to elect Garfield and Arthur in 1880, after an unsuccessful attempt of the Senatorial coterie led by Conkling, Cameron, and Logan to nominate and elect Grant for a third term. James G. Blaine, "the plumed Knight of

Maine," who had, in 1876, attempted to keep alive the Southern issue by "waving the bloody shirt" over the question of Southern amnesty and who had been defeated for the presidential nomination of his party in that year, became the leading member in Garfield's administration, and through his influence the presidential patronage was used in New York in a way to offend Mr. Roscoe Conkling, a powerful Senatorial leader from that State. Blaine and Conkling were personal enemies,¹ and it now appeared to the latter that the Administration was bent upon undermining him in his own State. He and his colleague, Senator T. C. Platt, resigned from the Senate, and a serious breach occurred among New York Republicans. The opposing factions become known as the "Stalwarts" and the "Half-Breeds." This led to the election of Mr. Cleveland as Governor of New York in 1882 by the overwhelming popular majority of 192,000, and it was a very influential factor in leading to the election of Cleveland to the presidency in 1884. The triumph of Blaine by his nomination for the presidency in the Republican convention in 1884 not only alienated the Independents, who were dubbed as "Mugwumps" (see p. 216), but the special "Stalwart" supporters of Conkling could not be reconciled to Blaine's nomination.²

¹ On a former occasion while both men were in the House of Representatives, Blaine referred to Conkling as the "strutting turkey gobbler of the House," and so wounded the vanity of Conkling that a permanent breach occurred between the two men. See Peck's *Twenty Years of the Republic*, pp. 41-42.

² When Conkling was urged to come to the support and defense of Blaine in the closing days of the campaign of 1884, if by only one speech, he replied that he was "not engaging in criminal practice." Thus is again illustrated the importance in the course of history of personalities in politics. Note the strained relations between Hamilton and Adams in 1800 and between Clay and Jackson in the middle period, as also the Roosevelt-Taft feud in recent times.

Blaine was defeated by a narrow margin of 1100 votes in New York, and with Cleveland's accession the Democratic party was restored to power in the presidency for the first time within twenty-five years.¹

Significance has been held to attach to the accession of Cleveland because of the fact that the Democratic party was to be no longer exiled from power on account of its solid Southern support. The South, as a distinct section, was to be called more fully into the national councils; the advantage of Southern leadership was to be obtained, and thus the unity of the Republic was

¹ A number of factors, some apparently of minor importance, conspired to bring about the defeat of Blaine in New York, and by the loss of New York he lost the presidency. The Prohibition candidate, Governor St. John, of Kansas, polled about 25,000 votes in the State, which were drawn mostly from the Republican ranks. The "Burchard incident" helped in the same direction,—a *faux pas* by a preacher, who, in addressing Blaine on behalf of a large gathering of Protestant ministers, referred to the Democratic party as the party of "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion," on the very eve of an election in which Blaine was appealing strongly for Catholic support. The Conkling defection and the "Mugwump" support of Cleveland were other factors. The "Mugwumps" were Independent Republicans in 1884 who refused to support Blaine chiefly on personal grounds, and who either voted for Cleveland or St. John, or refused to vote. The rise of this independent force within the Republican party, especially in New York, may be traced to the "Young Republicans" or "Young Scratchers" who, in 1879, refused to vote for Alonzo B. Cornell for Governor. Cornell had been a naval officer in the New York Custom-House while acting as a party manager, and he was using his office as Republican party headquarters. Upon a protest made by the Civil Service Reform League, Cornell was dismissed by President Hayes, whereupon the Conkling Republican machine, in order to show its contempt for what the "Stalwarts" called "snivel service reform," nominated Cornell for Governor in the face of the protest of anti-machine Republicans. A "Scratchers" movement was organized by a few men in New York City, led by George Haven Putnam, R. A. Bowker, and George William Curtis, against Cornell (and Soule, for State Engineer on account of canal corruption). More than 20,000 scratched ballots were cast, which would have been enough to defeat Cornell if John Kelly, the Tammany chief,

to be more fully restored.¹ But the change that was wrought by the passing of the government from one party to the other was more nominal than real. Reconciliation between the sections had already been well begun. President Hayes had called an ex-Confederate into his Cabinet in the person of General Key, of Tennessee; the Federal troops had been withdrawn from interference or control in Southern local government; complete amnesty had been declared among all classes, and the Southern States were left in equal participation and power in the government with the other States. But the significant fact in the accession of Cleveland was that the Republican party which had been regarded with hatred and aversion by the ruling element in the South for a generation was now displaced by a party with friendlier feeling and kindred party loyalty, and the consequence was the South felt a renewed attachment to the Union, and its people were the more ready to offer their services in the national councils and to acknowledge a more cordial allegiance to the national power. The absurd partisan predictions of ruin to the country from Democratic ascendancy, of the undoing of the results of the war, of the reënslaving of the negroes, were soon brought to con-

had not bolted from the regular Democratic ticket on account of a falling out with Governor Robinson, the Tilden Democrat who was running for reëlection. "Political dudes," "Pharisees," "Deputy Democrats," "Miss Nancys," "Sore-heads," "Voters in the air," and other epithets were hurled at the "Scratchers," but they persisted in subordinating their party loyalty to their loyalty to the public welfare, and they exercised considerable influence in breaking the party spell of always following the "regular" nomination, and in cultivating independent thinking and independent voting. They objected to passive acquiescence to the dictation of a convention packed by a machine.

¹ Peck's *Twenty Years of the Republic*, p. 721.

fusion by the conduct of the Cleveland administration. Cleveland soon proved that he would be the President of the whole country and that he would address himself with courage and patriotism not to sectional issues and divisions of the past but to the pressing problems of the day.

The new President was called upon to make a record for his party toward public policies on which his party supporters were seriously divided. These policies related to:

1. Civil Service Reform,
2. Silver Coinage,
3. The Tariff.

On these questions Mr. Cleveland left no one in doubt as to the direction in which he would lead his party, but he encountered faction, schism, and reaction on each of the issues as they appeared for administrative action. In the civil service the party pressure on Cleveland for appointments to office was unusually strong. He found over 100,000 offices filled by Republicans, while but few Democrats were in the service. Thousands of his party supporters were clamoring for appointment. The Democratic spoilsmen urged a "clean sweep," that the "Republican rascals" should all be turned out to satisfy the office-hunger of Democratic workers and those who demanded recognition for party services. Cleveland yielded in part and resisted in part. He filled vacancies with Democrats, but he would not sweep out all Republicans regardless of their merits. He held that large numbers of men holding public places had forfeited all claims to retention because they had used their offices for party purposes. "Instead of being decent public servants they had proved themselves offensive partisans and un-

scrupulous manipulators of local party management." This was especially true in the Post-Office Department, and the Assistant Postmaster-General, Mr. Adlai Stevenson, applied the ax of removal in that department with vigor, removing numerous Republicans for "offensive partisanship." Yet Cleveland was committed to the reform of the civil service. He announced the famous maxim, "a public office is a public trust."¹ He enforced the law against the party assessment of office-holders; as Hayes and Arthur had done before him, he approved and gradually extended the operation of the civil service rules and increased the classified service to over 27,000 places. Yet his course did not satisfy either the spoilsmen or the pronounced advocates of civil service reform within his party, and on this issue he cooled the ardor of some party workers and entirely alienated the support of some civil service reformers who had advocated his election.

On the problem of money and coinage, Cleveland urged that "our finances should be established upon a sound and sensible basis, to secure the safety and confidence of business and to make the wage of labor sure and steady." Free silver coinage had received strong support within his party and the limited compulsory coinage then in operation was probably receiving the assent of the greater part of his party supporters. The question had not been presented to the voters as an issue in the contest of 1884, which had resulted in Democratic victory; but Cleveland in his first message spoke boldly and without wavering or concealment in favor of suspending silver coinage. The silver that had been coined at the rate of \$2,000,000 a month had

¹ See William C. Hudson's *Random Recollections of an Old Political Reporter*, pp. 175-184.

accumulated, for the most part, as an idle mass in the treasury. The policy had already led to the hoarding of gold, and if it continued gold would abandon the field of circulation to silver alone. The silver was a legal tender and customs receipts were paid in it. Once in the Treasury it was not so readily paid out, but gold was paid out instead, as the Government was in the habit of paying out gold on demand on any claims offered against it. Thus the increased coinage of silver became the means of depleting the gold reserve, by the operation of the "endless chain,"—silver being paid into the government coffers while gold was constantly being paid out.¹

"As this process goes on," said Mr. Cleveland, "and the period approaches when the Government will be obliged to offer silver in payment of its obligations there would be inducements to hoard gold, which would then be withdrawn from circulation and the two coins would part company. Gold would still be the standard and it would be necessary to have it in our dealings with foreign countries. Hoarded gold would be sold to merchants and others to liquidate foreign debts; banks would pay depositors in silver bought with gold, and the laboring man would find his dollar received in wages for toil sadly shrunk in its purchasing power."²

But the Democratic party was not prepared to support Mr. Cleveland in this policy, and when the issue was forced to the front after the lapse of another decade the party specifically repudiated his leadership.

On the subject of the tariff, through his famous

¹ The Silver men criticised the Administration for not paying out silver, but Cleveland held that such a course would reduce the money standard to a silver basis and impair the national credit.

² *Message*, Dec. 8, 1885.

messages of 1886 and 1887, the latter being entirely devoted to the subject of the tariff, Cleveland emphasized the importance of tariff reform, brought the tariff issue to the front, and helped to make it a line of cleavage and a distinct issue between the two leading parties. He would not withdraw all the advantages of protection which had been awarded to home productions, and he insisted that the question of free trade was not involved. He would not bandy epithets by discussing theories of free trade and protection. "It is a condition, not a theory, that confronts us," and in this he gave another familiar expression to political history. Cleveland was warned that his tariff message would endanger his reelection, but he deemed it more important that it be delivered to Congress and to the people than that he be reelected.

Upon the tariff issue which he thus pressed to the front, Cleveland was defeated for reelection by Harrison in 1888, but he in turn defeated Harrison for reelection in 1892. Mr. Harrison proved himself to be a high-minded and public-spirited President, who refused to allow his administration to be controlled by his party bosses and his party machine. While the Republicans under Harrison became more unified and pronounced for high protection, as indicated by the passage of the McKinley Bill in 1890, yet Harrison, like Cleveland, had to wrestle with a divided party on civil service reform and silver coinage. He helped to advance civil service reform and he stood for "sound money" and against silver payments; but his course offended some of the spoilsmen of his party, among them Senator Quay, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, while agricultural Republicans in the West, especially in Kansas and Nebraska, were further detached from

the support of the Republican party on account of the financial question.

In his second administration Cleveland continued the advocacy of his positive policies. He supported the Wilson bill in 1894, which reduced the tariff, but the protectionist forces within his party so modified the bill that Cleveland permitted it to become a law without his signature, while he denounced the abandonment of tariff reform by certain of his party leaders in the Senate as "an act of party perfidy and dishonor." He forced the repeal of the Silver Purchase Act, the repeal being largely dominated by executive influence.¹

This policy together with Cleveland's refusal to use silver in government payments and his issue of \$262,000,000 of bonds to protect the gold reserve, threw into violent antagonism to his administration certain labor and agricultural elements in the South and West who were hoping for relief from the panic of 1893 and the hard times following, by an increase of the country's supply of money. Furthermore, the vigorous action under Cleveland resulting by the use

¹ In the campaign of 1892 certain Democratic leaders in the West, like Senator Voorhees of Indiana, who claimed to be for free silver, represented to their constituents that Cleveland, if reelected, would be willing to sign a free silver bill. Such an assertion was without shadow of warrant or authority. Cleveland had left no one in doubt upon that point. He wrote a notable anti-free silver letter in February, 1891. The question had arisen as to what reply he should make to an invitation to attend a banquet at which the free coinage of silver was to be attacked. Cleveland was advised to keep silent, since to speak might injure his chances of renomination in 1892. But he spoke with no uncertain voice. He denounced "the dangerous and reckless experiment of free coinage," and this utterance, at a time when free silver had such a hold upon his party, his admirers regarded as "a brave word of conviction on a burning question," at a most opportune time, and as demonstration again that Cleveland cared more for principle than for the presidency.

of troops and judicial injunction in the suppression of the Chicago riots in connection with the notable strike of the American Railway Union led by Mr. Debs in 1894 brought about still further antagonism to Mr. Cleveland, especially among the circles of organized labor. There was a sore situation and it was evident as Mr. Cleveland's second term drew to a close that his party was facing dissension and disruption.¹

Apart from the intense struggle of 1896 and the antagonistic social and financial forces leading to it, looking merely at the conventional and traditional struggles between Republicans and Democrats apart from the forces that were dividing each party, this period of our party history (1876-1896), especially in its earlier years, may be looked upon as a time of battledore and shuttlecock in the political game; when there was no serious issue or difference between the parties, when the struggle between them was more or less in the nature of a sham battle or a conflict between two sets of opposing bosses for the spoils of offices,—a period of seesaw in politics when moneyed men in control of both party machines, standing as it were in the middle of the balancing board, were able and willing to give the tilt first to one side and then to the other,

¹ As an evidence of the intense Democratic opposition to Cleveland within his party note the course of Governor Benj. R. Tillman, of South Carolina, who as a candidate for the United States Senate, promised his constituents that if he were sent to Washington he would "stick his pitch fork into Cleveland's ribs." Also see Tillman's speech in the Senate in opposition to the financial policy of Cleveland's administration, of January 29, 1896. Tillman asserted that "in the entire history of this country the high office of President has never been so prostituted and never has the appointing power been so abused." *Cong. Record*, 54th Cong., 1st Sess., vol. xxviii., part 2, pp. 1072-1080. For the two opposing views of Cleveland see Peck's *Twenty-five Years of the Republic*, pp. 460-461. *r*

each party realizing alternately victory and defeat. The real and significant influences that were to determine the course of political history were deeper and were to be found elsewhere than in the nominal leaderships and formal platform expressions of the dominant parties. So the period following 1876 has been designated as one in which there was no clear line of division between the parties on political issues and public policies. The parties appealed to tradition, party prejudices, and the power of party habit for support; the party managers relied on the power of organization, the desire of the "ins" to remain in, of the "outs" to get in, on appeals to the past, on party names and party loyalty as forces for holding the parties together. The organizations were made more powerful, but vital force was lacking because of lack of distinct and clearly cut differences on public issues. The parties went on existing "because they had existed; the mill went on turning but there was no grist to grind."¹ There were, of course, public questions,—the tariff, civil service reform, governmental control of railways, silver and finance, the control of the liquor traffic,—but the parties assumed no pronounced or opposing positions upon these. There were Free-Traders and Protectionists in both parties,—Free-Trade Republicans and Protectionist Democrats; there were "Silver men" and inflationists as well as "Gold men" and contractionists in both parties. States' rights Democrats as well as nationalizing Republicans favored the enlargement of state agencies and governmental powers in the control of railways and other corporations. On minor issues each party was similarly divided. It was almost another period of personal

¹ Bryce.

politics. The bosses sought to cause party spirit to prevail over public spirit. Parties represented not actual political issues but traditions and desire for place and power. "Reform" and "economy" were stock terms used by both parties to gain public favor. Civil service reform was not adopted by either party, while the party organizations in their state and national committees were openly hostile to this cause. On money and currency the only party announcing a distinct policy was the Greenbackers. They favored unlimited coinage of silver and a paper currency to be issued exclusively by the Government,—a policy that was positive and intelligible but which was thought by most leaders of public opinion to be foolish and fatal. Yet no one was able to tell what the Republican and Democratic financial policy was. The Ohio Democrats looked toward Greenbackism; the New York Democrats opposed this course. The Republicans proposed to maintain resumption—a purely negative policy. Neither party was clearly one of free trade or protection. There was no commanding foreign question. The Republicans claimed to stand for national authority, the Democrats for State power,—the natural long-standing historic division between parties; but this issue was a mere abstraction as there were no measures pending on which the issue could be applied. This was a period, then, in which the contests tended to become personal, and factions arose within the parties. There were "Stalwarts" and "Half-Breeds" among the Republicans, and "Tammanyites" and "Anti-Tammanyites," "Snappers" and "Anti-Snappers" among the Democrats, and Mugwumps" and "Goo-Goos"¹

¹ This was a nickname applied in derision by Tammany men to the members of the Good Government Clubs first organized in New York City.

among all parties. In the large parties, machine politics became highly developed, and bosses and rings rose to a flourishing state. Convention contests were about men rather than about principles.

While party issues were not clearly defined in this period, there were party tendencies that became clearly marked. The Republicans tended to become distinctly a Protectionist party, while the Democrats tended, though not so positively, to become a party for Free Trade and a revenue tariff. By 1892, the parties came to a clear-cut issue upon that question, the Democrats coming out boldly for "a tariff for revenue only" (a policy which, after they carried the election, they were still not able to carry out on account of divisions within the party), while the Republicans stood clearly, as they had done in the campaigns of 1884 and 1888, for the protective policy.¹ It may be said that after the Republicans accepted the leadership of Mr. Blaine in 1884, their party may be considered as pronouncedly for Protection; that is, they had come to the policy of levying taxes on imports, not for purposes of revenue primarily, but for purposes of protecting certain industries. The Republicans were not originally a Protectionist party. They were not brought into being for that cause, and former Free-Trade Democrats and Free-Soilers helped make up

**Tendencies
toward
Party
Divisions
on the
Tariff**

¹ In the last weeks of the campaign of 1880 Republican leaders sought to push the tariff issue to the front, and their speakers and newspapers ridiculed General Hancock, the Democratic candidate for president, for saying that the protective tariff was a "local issue." The sage character of Hancock's incidental remark was repeatedly illustrated subsequently by the intra-party divisions on the tariff and the influence of local industries as indicated by the votes in Congress upon proposed measures of tariff reform.

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its voting strength. The first Republican platform in 1856 said nothing upon the subject of Protection, but, as the successor and heir to the Whigs, the Republicans inherited Protectionist tendencies and constituencies. In their platform of 1860, the Whig element in the Republican party gently led the Free-Soil Democrats in the direction of Protection by a mild declaration in favor of duties on imports so adjusted "as to encourage the development of the industrial interests of the whole country." This was looked to as a policy that would secure "liberal wages to the workingmen and remunerative prices to agriculture." This clever bid for the labor vote in the North and especially for Protectionist votes in Pennsylvania, may have had a decisive influence in the election of Lincoln.¹ After the war the Protectionist policy became more pronounced in the Republican party, and under the leadership of Mr. Blaine and Mr. McKinley the party became definitely committed to that policy, as much so as the Whig party in its best days under the leadership of Clay. After the election of the second Harrison in 1888, the Republicans, led by Mr. McKinley in the House of Representatives, enacted a high-protective measure, the McKinley Bill, in 1890. Industrial depression, labor troubles, and the Homestead strike caused reaction against the Republicans and the consequent election of a Democratic Congress in 1890 and a Democratic President in 1892. These elections were called Democratic "landslides," *i. e.*, overwhelming Democratic victories. Traditional Republican States, like Illinois and Wisconsin, were carried by the Democrats, and Ohio was almost lost to the Republicans. The Democratic

¹ Blaine's *Twenty Years*.

party, though united in securing the victory, was greatly disappointed in its results. Their President, Mr. Cleveland, was unable to lead his party or keep it united on public policies. It had been held together by the cohesive power of the organization, or the hope of office, or the hope of better times under a change of administration, and by an evasive platform, as in 1856. But, internally and really, the Democracy was hopelessly divided. This is seen in its divisions on the tariff, but more especially by internal differences on finance,—in the respective attitudes of its Eastern and Western wings toward financial policies and the moneyed classes. A new sectionalism had arisen, based on differing financial views and conditions. The West and South, the agricultural sections, were demanding a change in the financial policy of the Government. Under these conditions Mr. Cleveland's administration suffered one of the most sweeping and phenomenal defeats in the State and congressional elections of 1894 ever recorded in the annals of any party. The Republican "landslide" was unprecedented.

The Democrats were buried under tremendous majorities in every Northern State. The "solid South" was all that was left to them. The Republicans under the leadership of Mr. Hanna and Mr. McKinley, the apostles of Protection, were preparing again to appeal to the country on the issue of the tariff, when they were called upon to face a realignment of parties brought about by industrial, social, and political forces that had been at work within the parties and in third-party organizations for two decades.

The year 1896 will always be looked to as a land-

**Democratic
Schism
under
Cleveland**

**Unprece-
dented De-
feat of the
Democracy**

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mark in party history. It is like the year 1860. It uncovered another notable division within the Democratic party. It marked a break-up in old party ties. Like the years 1856 and 1860, the year 1896 illustrated forcibly the influence of third parties and political agitation within and without party control, in modifying the course of the old party organizations. The contest of 1896 did not bring a new party into the arena to contest the supremacy with the Republicans, but it witnessed a considerable break in the Republican ranks on the silver question and such a modification in the direction and leadership of the Democratic party that it was frequently held that a new party was contending for power, and the contest presented a situation in which party lines ran across all traditions.

This new situation in party conditions should not be looked upon merely as the result of a sudden impulse, or excited frenzy, within the notable Democratic Convention that nominated Mr. Bryan in 1896. It was not a matter of surprise to those who had been intelligent observers of the course of events that the Democratic party cut loose from the moorings to which Mr. Cleveland and the Eastern wing of the Democracy had attempted to bind it. The Southern and Western wings of the party believed that the course the Democracy pursued in 1896 was essential to party preservation. If in the face of the industrial and political situation of that year it had renominated Mr. Cleveland, or followed in the course marked out by his leadership, it would probably have come in third in the count of the electoral votes. It seemed difficult for Eastern Democrats and those of the conservative type to un-

**The Year
1896 a
Political
Landmark**

**The New
Democracy
Repudiates
the Old
Leadership**

derstand this situation. To them Cleveland's course had been so straightforward and honorable; at a time of financial crisis he had stood, as they believed, so courageously and patriotically for "sound money" and against the "inflation and dishonor of the silver craze"; his conduct had been so clearly in harmony with Democratic principles and the best Democratic traditions, while his leadership had brought such notable success,—in view of this career and the party course that seemed so wise, these honest conservatives who had served the party so long were disposed to look with impatience and pronounced antagonism upon what they considered the "crazes" of "wild finance" that so seriously threatened the unity of the party and the honor and credit of the country. They thought the dissatisfaction within the party had come from the promptings of "soreheads," "cranks," and "demagogues." But in the West and South there was a deep-rooted and wide-spread Democratic antagonism to Cleveland and his money policy.¹ These Democrats thought his course was entirely in the interest of the propertied and creditor classes. The Farmers' Alliances, the Labor Unions, the Populists, the Silver Leagues,—these had all cultivated and aroused such an opposition that it is quite reasonable to believe that if the conservative forces had controlled the Democratic party in 1896 and committed it openly to a continuance of Mr. Cleveland's leadership, the Populist party would have come into greater prominence and would, as the election returns of 1894 clearly indicated, have carried more States (though probably not in the aggregate a larger popular vote) than the Cleveland Democracy. It is conceivable that the National

¹ See footnote, p. 126.

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Democratic party would have given way, throughout the West and South, as it had already done in several of the Western States, to a new organization. The Populists were positive, aggressive, and growing. The times called for a radical party. The Republicans had now clearly become a conservative party, as that party was standing for the industrial status, against any positive advance toward nationalizing the great quasi-public corporations and agencies, and they were standing practically for the same financial and industrial policies that had been promoted by Mr. Cleveland's administration. It was these new questions—money and transportation, not the tariff—on which men were now to divide. On the positive and radical propositions for a larger social control of monopoly powers, including the power of issuing money, the conservative Democracy and the Republicans were in essential harmony. This was so clearly the case that the Cleveland Democrats, when the new issues were presented, could easily, as they generally did, vote for the Republican candidate. The radical and social Democracy felt that the powerful classes were merged in a community of interests, feelings, and fears. The millionaire managers of great trusts, the presidents of great banking concerns, the presidents of the great railways, men who had large industrial and business interests at stake—disregarded party ties and traditions and united naturally with the conservative elements under Republican leadership. The agricultural and laboring masses, though discontented and distressed, and ready for radical change, did not perceive, or believe, that they had a community of interests in antagonism to those whose great commercial and moneyed interests had been threatened by the larger popular control of cor-

porate forces toward which the Bryan Democracy was committed; and their voting strength was very largely influenced and controlled by the forces representing the powerful managers and captains of industry. Mr. Bryce has said that parties in Europe differ from those in America, because in this country the line of cleavage between parties is not horizontal but vertical. That is, the line separating the Republicans from the Democrats in America runs up and down through all social classes, leaving the rich and the poor, the high and the low, and the well-to-do in approximately equal numbers in both parties; while in Europe the cleavage between parties cuts horizontally, leaving the rich, the powerful, the well-born in one party, and the poor, struggling proletariat, with tendencies toward socialism or anarchy, in the other. The campaign of 1896 is notable as marking a tendency, if not an accomplished condition, in the direction of European divisions. It is a most unfortunate line of division, and one which it was hoped American Democracy would be able to prevent, one most threatening to the peace and welfare of the republic. Where the responsibility lies for such a condition is, of course, a question for dispute.

This significant social change was not wrought in a single year. It was not the result of convention oratory. The action of the Democratic party in 1896 was but a symptom, not a cause, of the social conditions, or the social disease. This action was but a result of political and social forces and conflicts that had been in operation for years before. To understand the party schisms that then occurred it is necessary, as in studying

Premonitions of a Class Contest. Parties were Dividing Horizontally

Third Party Influence and the Democracy, 1896

the notable schism of 1860, to trace briefly the political agitations and movements within and without the old parties during the preceding decades. To this end it is important to note certain third-party movements and their causes.

The *National*, or the *Greenback*, party had its origin in the financial legislation growing out of the Civil

War. In the prosecution of the war it was found to be necessary, or thought to be by Congress, to issue a large quantity

of Treasury notes, or greenbacks, as a means of securing money to conduct the war. Four hundred and fifty million dollars of these notes were issued. They were declared by the law issuing them to be "lawful money and a legal tender in payment of all debts, public or private, except duties on imports and interest on the public debts." After the

Civil War the question arose as to whether these notes should be retained in circulation, and whether also they could be fairly and legitimately used to pay a part of

the bonded debt of the nation. The Administration, desirous of bringing the country back, as soon as possible, to a specie basis, held the orthodox view of regarding these notes not as money but as a debt of the Government, as promises to pay, as a forced loan: they should be paid off, *i. e.*, retired and cancelled, as rapidly as possible. Interest-bearing gold bonds should be issued in their place and thus the "greenbacks" would be redeemed. The Administration held that the function of issuing notes to be used as money should not be exercised by the Government as a permanent policy, but that this function should be delegated to the banks, and that

**Greenback
Discussion**

**Legal-
Tender
Act**

the bonds, held very largely by the banks, should be paid in "coin."¹

An Act of March 12, 1866, authorized the funding of a part of the bonded debt, or a change in its form, and the cancellation of \$10,000,000 of the greenbacks within six months; and thereafter \$4,000,000, or less, of the greenbacks each month should be retired. Secretary McCulloch, who believed in the policy of retirement and contraction of the greenbacks, retired the maximum amount allowed by law, and, by 1867, the greenbacks had been reduced to \$356,000,000. The friends of the greenbacks throughout the country exerted their influence on Congress, and an Act of February 4, 1868, forbade further retirement. The object of the gold-standard policy pursued by Secretary McCulloch was to convert United States notes into interest-bearing bonds, force immediate or rapid resumption of specie payments, and the substitution of bank-notes for greenbacks. Secretary McCulloch and his financial supporters urged firm and steady contraction, that the retirement

Policy of
Secretary
McCulloch

¹"The theory of the authors of the Legal-Tender Act was clearly understood. They held the issue of these notes to be simply creation of a Government floating debt, the notes being endowed with special privileges only in order that they might be floated. That the resort to legal-tender powers was an evil justified only by extreme emergency, and that the circulation of Government notes in any form was a purely temporary measure, were the unanimous convictions of the statesmen who contrived the system. The logical inference that these Government notes would be paid off and cancelled as soon as the war deficiency had ended, was publicly accepted. This fact is clearly proved by the record. The statesmen of the day built up the national banking system on the express theory that the bank-notes would provide the requisite currency of the future, whereas the Government notes would not."—Noyes, *Thirty Years of American Finance*, p. 8. This indicates clearly the attitude and policy toward the greenback currency which the Greenbackers opposed.

of the greenback circulation should be definitely and unchangeably established, and that the process should go on as rapidly as possible. McCulloch held that the greenbacks were unconstitutional, and that to retain them would be to "dishonor our engagements and to wander far from the old landmarks both in finance and ethics."¹

This policy aroused strong popular opposition, which was reflected in Congress by representatives of all parties, by men like John Sherman, Oliver P. Morton, Thaddeus Stevens, William D. Kelley, and Benjamin F. Butler, among Friends of the Greenback Check Contraction Republicans, and men like Geo. H. Pendleton and Thos. A. Hendricks among the Democrats. The disordered markets during and following 1866 and the fall in prices were attributed in the public mind and by many public men to the Treasury policy of contraction, of reducing the outstanding notes.² The funding policy had increased the amount of six-per-cent. bonds by \$637,000,000, and the result, it was asserted, was a contraction of the currency, or an appreciation of the money standard, an increase in the burden of public and private debts, a stringency in the money market, a fall in prices, and a serious derangement of the business of the country.³ It was held that the "amount of legal tender now outstanding is not too much for the present condition of the country," and it was asked why, "when we have \$450,000,000 bearing no interest, and which need bear no interest, should these be taken up and put into bonds?"⁴ It

¹ McCulloch's *Recollections*.

² O. P. Morton, Senate speech, Jan. 9, 1868.

³ Sherman, *Forty Years in the House and Senate*, vol. i., p. 385.

⁴ John Sherman in the Senate, April 9th, and Thaddeus Stevens in the House, March 16, 1866, cited by Noyes, *Thirty Years of American Finance*, p. 13.

was this opposition that checked Secretary McCulloch's policy of contraction, that ended for six years all serious efforts at resumption of specie payment, and that introduced the country to "the beginning of the fiat-money party."¹ Between March, 1872, and January, 1874, the amount of the greenbacks was increased some \$25,000,000, so that the outstanding amount by 1874 was \$382,000,000. The panic of 1873 and the hard times resulting therefrom led to still further demand for the issue of Treasury notes, but the "Inflation Bill" of 1874, providing for an increase, was vetoed by President Grant. This veto aroused great opposition in Western communities that were favorable to the greenback circulation. The Resumption Act of 1875 was even more objectionable to greenback sentiment, as under its operation the greenback circulation was to be gradually reduced. The sentiment for the greenback again asserted itself in Congress, and by an Act of May 31, 1878, all further retirement or cancellation of legal-tender notes was forbidden, but "when redeemed or received into the Treasury they shall be reissued and paid out again and kept in circulation." Such is the law until this day.²

President
Grant
Vetoes
Further
Inflation

Resumption
Act, 1875

The Green-
backs are
Retained,
1878

In this period there was a constant struggle, in Congress and out, on the one hand to preserve or increase the greenbacks, to inflate the currency or to save it from contraction, and, on the other hand, to retire this currency in favor of bank-notes. This, the Greenbackers alleged, left the volume of the currency at the

¹ Noyes, p. 16.

² The law of March 14, 1900, does not materially modify this status of the greenback.

mercy of the banks. The advocates of the greenbacks looked upon these notes not as an obligation to be paid off or to be converted into bonds, but as money, constitutional currency, as better than bank-notes, for they were circulating without interest and were secured by the same Government credit; and, if they were to be regarded as a debt, they were, in any case, the least burdensome of all the forms of the public indebtedness; and they believed that the withdrawal of the greenbacks would add to the burden of all debts of the people and cripple industry.

Coupled with the issue over Government paper currency was the question as to the money in which certain Government bonds were to be paid.

**Payment of
the Bonded
Debt**

By the law they were payable in "lawful money,"—that is, in greenbacks. The bonds had been bought, while the Government was in doubt and distress, at forty or fifty cents on the dollar. In 1867, under Secretary McCulloch's policy, the five-twenties, more than \$1,500,000,000 in amount, were made payable in coin. The Greenbackers asserted

that this was not required by the public faith; that it was an act directly in the interest of public creditors and at the expense of a heavily burdened and tax-ridden people; that the money which was good enough for the soldier who had risked his life for the nation should be good enough for the bondholder, who had risked nothing, not even his gold, except at great odds, but who was now doubling and

**The Green-
backers'
Complaint
of the
Financial
Policy
toward the
Bonded
Debt**

trebling his rate of interest; that with gold at a premium of 140 and with the bonds exempt from State and municipal taxation the nominal interest rate on the bonds of six per cent. would be virtually increased to twelve

per cent., and with Government securities bearing such a high rate of interest and with bonds thus being pushed to a premium, no capitalist would take his money out of Government securities to risk it in ordinary business; that appreciating bonds and increasing rate of Government interest were certain to crush the life out of industrial pursuits; that in the marts of trade money could not be obtained for legitimate business for less than twelve per cent. or fifteen per cent. as long as capitalists and bankers could get ten or twelve per cent. on their bonds; that under this system of gold payment even greater profits were being allowed to the banks; for under the financial system which the gold policy was promoting the banks were to be allowed to use their bonds (so cheaply obtained and now made so valuable) as the basis of issuing their bank-notes, and these bank-notes were to be substituted for the greenbacks and were to be loaned to the people by the bankers at a high rate of interest, while the greenbacks, the "money of the people," were to be retired and destroyed. These were, in brief, the main contentions of those who opposed the financial policy of the Government in the decade following the war.

It was this financial struggle, between 1866 and 1876, that gave rise to the Greenback party. The chief purpose of the party was to save the greenbacks from destruction, to increase their issue, and to make their use permanent, and to pay with these notes all Government obligations except such as were by existing contracts made payable in coin. This was virtually the position of the majority of the Democratic party in the West in 1868, led by men like Pendleton, Hendricks, and Voorhees. The greenback idea also received much encouragement from prominent Republican leaders.

**The Green-
back Party**

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In Indianapolis, May 17, 1876, the Greenbackers nominated Peter Cooper, of New York, for President, and Samuel F. Cary, of Ohio, for Vice-President. The party claimed to be called into existence "by the necessities of the people, to furnish relief to the depressed industries of the country."

They demanded "the immediate and unconditional repeal of the Specie Resumption Act of January 14, 1875, and the rescue of our industries from the ruin and disaster resulting from its enforcement."

"We believe that a United States note, issued directly by the Government and convertible on demand into United States obligations [bonds], bearing a rate of interest not exceeding 3.65 per cent. per annum, and exchangeable for United States notes at par, will afford the best circulating medium ever devised. Such United States notes should be full legal tender for all purposes, except for the payment of such obligations as are, by existing contracts, especially made payable in coin; and we hold that it is the duty of the Government to provide such a circulating medium, and insist in the language of Thomas Jefferson that bank paper must be suppressed and the circulation restored to whom it belongs.

We earnestly protest against any further issue of gold bonds to foreigners. The American people will gladly take these bonds if made payable at the option of the holder."¹

The greenback bonds and the greenbacks were to be interchangeable. If a man had more money than he could profitably use in business he could buy bonds; if he needed money for his business he could exchange his bonds for the money. Such an interchangeable bond would help to expand the currency, for any one buying a bond

**The Inter-
changeable
Bond**

¹ Greenback Platform, 1876.

"could deliver it to his creditor, and if the creditor wanted to dispose of it he could also deliver it as money, the money for it being in the United States Treasury to be had for the asking. So that the very bond would become an extension of the currency, being used in business interchangeably with currency."¹

This plan was intended by the Greenbackers for the relief of the United States Government from a high rate of interest and of the people from a stringency in the money market.

The Greenbackers believed in "fiat money,"—that governments declare by their fiat what shall be money for their peoples; that all money, metallic or paper, should be issued and its volume controlled by the Government, not by banking corporations; that a precious or dear commodity, like gold, which may be limited in quantity by the fortunes of mining ventures, or by commercial corners on Wall Street, is not necessary to stability or honesty in currency; that the value of money depends not on its substance, nor the labor cost of its material, nor upon its "redemption," but upon the relation between the money-demand and the money-supply; that money-value is not intrinsic,—no value is intrinsic,—but that the value of money, like that of all commodities will depend chiefly upon the great law of supply and demand. The Greenbackers held that money is the creature of law, not of custom; that gold was not a divinely appointed money substance, but that in civilized States, where men had ceased to rely on varying customs in determining the money substance, the statute law of the sovereign could determine that any cheap substance might be the final money of the realm, to be accepted everywhere for taxes and debts. Paper

**Greenback
Idea of
Money**

¹ *Butler's Book*, p. 957.

money, limited in supply, put forth by a financially responsible Government, with the unlimited power of taxation, making it receivable for *all* debts public and private without exception, involving no promise, and guaranteeing no redemption except the redemption involved in receiving it for taxes and compelling its acceptance for debts,—this, the Greenbackers held, would be the best and most rational money that could be devised. They did not demand an unlimited issue of paper. That oft-repeated assertion was, of course, a canard to bring the party into disrepute. The issues were to be limited by the requirements of business, by the extent to which the notes could be absorbed by the country; and this, it was contended, would be automatic and self-regulating under the operation of the interchangeable bond.¹ Nor did the Greenbackers assert that law could create value further than that the law could increase or decrease the amount of paper money, and add to the demand for Government paper by decreeing the universal use—payment of debts and taxes—to which it could be put.

The greenback idea of money has had a tremendous influence on politics and parties. It affected voters in all parties and became the basis of the money plank in later and larger parties than the Greenbackers. The constitutionality of greenback money has received the sanction of a Supreme Court decision, and recent party history shows that this idea of money is much more prevalent in America to-day than when it was first launched as the basis of a party.²

**Influence
of the
Greenback
Idea on
Politics
and Parties**

¹ See p. 142.

² Compare the vote of 1880 in support of this idea with that of 1892 and 1896. Noyes, *Thirty Years of American Finance*, p. 181. It is to be noted, also, that all Socialists are essentially Greenbackers on the money issue.

The new party and its demands were, as is usual with third parties, met with derision and ridicule. Its advocates were ever ready to talk on the money question on the street-corner or in the country cross-roads store; and they were ridiculed as impecunious debtors who wished to cheat their creditors, and who never worked "except with their mouths." But the Greenbackers were, as a rule, earnest, honest, and patriotic men, humble wealth-producers, whose interests had led them to an intelligent study, as far as their limitations permitted, of the issues on which they constantly challenged public discussion. The movement had its origin among common folk and it was without great scholars or leaders, though some able men among philanthropists and scholars gave their assent to it.

In 1876 the Greenbackers cast 81,000 votes for Peter Cooper for President. In 1880 they nominated James B. Weaver of Iowa, and B. J. Chambers of Texas, for President and Vice-President, and cast 308,000 votes. In this campaign they advanced new and positive proposals on industrial questions: that labor should be protected by an eight-hour law, by inspection of factories, mines, and workshops; against the importation of cheap contract labor; against gigantic land-grants to railroads and corporations, and for the forfeiting of grants already made for non-fulfilment of contract; for the regulation of inter-State commerce; for a graduated income tax; and they denounced all tendencies and agencies calculated to deprive the people of direct power over their government.

It will be seen from these declarations that the Greenbackers were the forerunners of, and largely identical with, the labor parties and Populists who came

Growth
of the
Greenback-
ers

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after. In 1884, the Democrats, whose interests were more threatened by the presence in the field of the Greenback organization, brought about fusion between the two parties in some of the Western States,—and fusion with Democracy has been called “the bourn from which no reform party ever returns.” The Greenbackers cast but 175,000 votes in 1884 for B. F. Butler, who ran chiefly to draw votes away from Cleveland, and in 1888 the party passed into history. Its members either returned to their old parties or merged with the Union Labor party of that year.

**The Green-
backers
Disappear
as a Party** The *Union Labor* party of 1888 was the successor of the Greenback or National party. It reflected the cry of discontent among wealth-producers.

“Farmers were forced by poverty to mortgage their estates; low prices were forcing bankruptcy, and the laborers were sinking into greater dependence. Strikes afford no relief; business men find collections almost impossible, while hundreds of millions of idle public money needed for relief is locked up in the United States Treasury, or placed without interest in favored banks in grim mockery of distress. Land monopoly flourishes as never before, and more owners of the soil are daily becoming tenants. Great transportation corporations still succeed in extorting their profits on watered stock through unjust charges.”

The party asserted the existence of corruption in high places; that railroads and great corporations controlled legislation and judicial decisions; that the United States Senate “has become an open scandal, its membership being purchased by the rich in open defiance of the popular will.” The party appealed to the voters

to come out of the old parties and unite with the Union Labor party to relieve the distress of the country. The appeal was made on principles identical in essential respects with the purposes of the Greenbackers who went before and the Populists who came after. The Union Labor vote of 1888 (146,900) fell below that of the Greenbackers in 1884 (175,000), but at the same time there was a gain of more than 87,000 votes over the Greenback poll of 1884, in the five Western agricultural States, presumably among Democratic constituencies, of Texas, Arkansas, Kansas, Minnesota, and Missouri. The farmers' condition, their granges, alliances, and schoolhouse meetings were preparing the way for the Populists.

The *People's* party, or *Populists*, first appeared in American politics in 1890. It was the outgrowth indirectly of the previous party movements that we have described, and, immediately, of **The People's Party, or Populists** the Farmers' Alliance, and certain labor organizations of the cities, which attempted to combine rural and urban labor in a party for the control of legislation in the interest of the common people. It was a movement against plutocracy, against the great accumulations and combinations of wealth, against the control of the country by the moneyed monopolies. The movement was promoted by economic discontent, hard times, and **Opposition to Control by the Rich** dissatisfaction, and it was prompted by a feeling that unjust burdens were being borne especially by the Southern and Western farmers; that wealth was being drained from the West to accumulate in the East. The three main grievances of which complaint was made related to: (1) *transportation*, (2) *land*, (3) *money*.

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Grievances of the Populists:
1. Transportation

1. As to transportation, it had been noticed that Congress had been very lavish in Government aid and protection to certain great railroad corporations. The active participation of railroad companies in politics and their methods of controlling legislation, no matter which of the old parties was in power, excited strong opposition. Congress had been slow in regulating inter-State commerce by protecting the producers, and when a law was passed and a commission appointed to secure fair dealing for the public, the railroads did what they could to violate and break down the legal provisions and regulations. These companies were charging exceedingly high freight rates, and they were often unjustly discriminating to the injury of the consumer and small producer. The farmers felt that the profits on their products were being eaten up by transportation rates, and that if they would successfully combat the power of the railroads in legislation they must combine in politics to bring the railroads under State control.

2. Land

2. As to the land question, it was found that much of the farming land in the West was bought up by city speculators. These men did nothing to improve the land, but held it and waited for the settler to come along, buy part of it, secure his loan by a mortgage, and by his own labor to enhance the value of the rest, and then it was only at higher prices, of course, that the settler, whose sacrifice and toil had created the values, could buy any of the rest. Great tracts of land were held out of reach of the home-hunters for the enhancement of prices. These lands, in many cases, had been given as a free gift to the railroads.¹

¹ The great social benefits of the railways were largely neglected in the Populist consideration of the subject.

3. Closely connected with the land troubles were the money grievances. Farm products declined in price and the farmers could not make payment on their mortgages. Upon borrowing to prevent foreclosure, they found money close, or they had to pay what seemed to them an exorbitant rate of interest. The Farmers' Alliances were imbued with the quantitative theory of money, that an increased money-supply would raise prices. They believed that falling prices had been caused not by the increased plenty of their products, for their crops had repeatedly failed, but by the relative decrease of the money-supply. Short crops and low prices came together, and the farmers concluded either that the railroads were getting the profits, or that money, because too scarce, was becoming too dear in terms of their products. They therefore readily accepted the Greenback idea of money and they looked with favor on the proposal that the National Government should resume the free coinage of silver. Free coinage was calculated to increase the money-supply, and it would, therefore, be a temporary measure of relief and a step in the right direction. But the Populists, as a rule, would have preferred the demonetization of gold to the remonetization of silver,—the substitution of paper for metallic money and the consequent increase of legal-tender paper by Government issues. The Populist was only incidentally a Silver man,—to him the silver policy was only a step in the direction of the ideal.

3. Money

Farmers' Alliances and the Quantitative Theory of Money

As the result of these grievances the Farmers' Alliances in the South and West went into politics. In the West, especially in Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota, and South Dakota, the campaign of 1890 was remarkable.

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Schoolhouses were packed with political gatherings, and men deserted their old parties by thousands. This new

Farmers' Campaign in the West, 1890 party propaganda could not be resisted by the old party rallying cries over the issues of the war and the tariff. In the "Mining" and "Granger" States of the West, the Populists practically absorbed the Democrats. Repub-

licanism was all that was left to oppose them. In some of the Southern States, notably in North Carolina, Alabama, and Texas, the Populists threatened Democratic ascendancy. There they either combined with or absorbed the Republicans. As a weapon against the dominant Democratic machine in the South, controlled, as the Populists asserted, by the class of political managers, or office-seekers, or by the old aristocracy, or by the commercial

Southern Populists and Equal Rights spirit of that section, many Southern Populists were ready to use the negro vote; they would go so far toward equal rights and fair play as to insist that intelligent negroes should be allowed to cast their votes and have them honestly counted. Populism was promoting divisions among the Southern whites in a way calculated to destroy, or at least to weaken, the force of the race line in politics. In South Carolina the Tillman Democracy, being on the economic issues entirely

The Tillman Democracy in South Carolina Populist in its disposition and sympathies, completely captured the Democratic organization of the State. Tillman aroused the small farmers of the Alliances against the former high-toned aristocratic slaveholders, like the Butlers and the Hamptons and other families, whose exclusive privilege it had been to control the politics of the State since the Revolution. Tillman organized

the "wool hats" (though he despised the *woolly heads*) against the "silk hats" and the "kid gloves." The Democratic party in South Carolina was committed, essentially, to Populist policies. The Democratic organization in other Southern States, as a means of retaining power and breaking the rising tide of Populism, was ready to follow in the same direction.

The Democratic Populists in the South and the Republican Populists in the Northwest claimed that they were the true Jeffersonian Democrats and Lincoln Republicans, the true popular party as against aristocratic and special privileges; that they wished to get back to Jeffersonian simplicity, honesty, and economy in government; to secure a fair field for all; to resist commercialism, to oppose banks, "Wall Street," and the "money power," and the general corruption and cowardice of the old parties. The Populists felt that it was their mission to speak for the rank and file of the common people in all parties, to stand for the revival of a New Democracy. Formerly the Congressional caucus nominated candidates and determined upon party policies. The people had overthrown this under Jackson's leadership and had substituted the convention system in which the people would be represented. But now party conventions and organizations were, to the Populist mind, mere machines for winning elections and keeping control of the offices. They were unscrupulous oligarchies, controlled by the rich. A few astute and wealthy managers and magnates, called "business men," controlling the party managers as their henchmen, set things up in private conferences, while the masses were being fooled

Populism
and
Jeffersonian
Democracy

Populist
Distrust of
Old Party
Machines.
They had
Ceased to
Represent
the People

and manipulated like voting herds. Then the business magnates, who dictated the nomination of the candidates and furnished the "sinews of war" for the campaign, were, of course, to conduct the government; and, equally of course, the laws were to be made and administered in such a way as to take good care of these managers' business interests. It was felt that if any President or Senator or Congressman who began to urge honestly and effectively that the great mine-owners, or railroads, or trust combinations,—the moneyed forces that controlled the money, land, and transportation of the people,—should be actually brought face to face with the enforcement of just and equal laws, then some silent but powerful influence within the parties would retire such public servants to private life.

Such were the impressions in Populists' minds and in the minds of many others to whom Populists appealed.

"Like Socialism in Europe, Populism in America demanded a larger State agency and activity in solving the industrial problems for the common benefit of all. 'We, the people, in the control of monopolies now used for private ends, through State control will use these agencies for the good of all.' It was socialism, not paternalism. Let the Government do for all what natural monopolies, evading all law and control, were doing for only a few. It was a movement whose roots went deep in the past, and it arose from grievances that were real."¹

The Populists felt that in the great concentration of

¹ Frederick E. Haynes, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, "The New Sectionalism," vol. x., p. 269. See also Frank L. McVey, *Economic Studies*, vol. i.

wealth and the consequent impoverishment and dependence of debtors and laborers, calamity had come upon the country, and their speakers were very generally derided as "calamity howlers." In their first national platform, adopted at Omaha, July 2, 1892, the Populists recited the ills of the country as follows:

Populists
and Hard
Times

"The conditions which surround us best justify our co-operation. We meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political, and material ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot-box, the legislatures, Congress, and even touches the ermine of the Bench. The people are demoralized.

First
Populist
Platform

The newspapers are largely subsidized or muzzled; public opinion silenced, business prostrated, our homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of capitalists. The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few unprecedented in the history of mankind; and the possessors of these despise the republic and endanger liberty. From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great classes of tramps and millionaires."¹

They represented the following ideas:

1. On money and taxation:

- a. The free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the legal ratio of 16 to 1.
- b. That Government paper money should take the place of bank-notes, and that the amount of this circulating medium be increased to \$50.00 per capita.
- c. That the money of the country be kept as much as possible in the hands of the people and hence all State

Populist
Demands

¹ Populist Platform, 1892.

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and National revenue be limited to necessary expenses of Government economically administered.

d. Opposition to the issue of bonds.

e. That postal savings-banks be established by the Government for the safe deposit of the earnings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

f. A graduated income tax, to force the holders of great wealth to contribute according to their ability to the needs of the Government.

2. On Transportation:

Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity, the Government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people.

The telegraph and the telephone, being a necessity for the transmission of news, should be owned and operated in the interest of the people.

3. Land:

All lands held by railroads or other corporations in excess of their actual needs, and all lands owned by aliens should be reclaimed by the Government and held open for settlement.

They recommended the initiative and the referendum.

The party nominated James B. Weaver of Iowa for President, and James T. Field of Virginia for Vice-President, and they cast about 1,040,000 votes. In five Western States at this election (Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, North Dakota, and Wyoming) the Democrats nominated no electors. This was partly because the Democratic voters had been absorbed by the Populists and partly because the Democratic managers regarded it as the most effective scheme to defeat the Republican electors in those States. If neither party should secure a majority in the Electoral College and the election should devolve upon the House, the Democrats, controlling

**Populist
Candidates**

**Democrats
in the West
Endorse
Populist
Nominees**

a majority of the State delegations, would elect their candidate. The chief result of this course on the part of the Democratic managers, however, was to commit their voters to Populist policies and alliances. The Populists now came to be either the first or the second party west of the Mississippi and south of the Ohio. They had carried a group of States, elected Representatives and Senators, and they took rank as the strongest third party since the Civil War.

Another factor must be taken account of in seeking the causes for the party changes of 1896. This is the Silver party. This had never been a party in the American sense; that is they had never yet nominated candidates for President and Vice-President. They were a body of men from all parties organized into a Bimetallic League, who were ready to make the silver issue paramount in the elections, and to stand together in abandoning their parties and joining any other that gave promise of a restoration of silver to the coinage. They believed not only in international, but in national bimetallism; that is, in the coinage of all the gold and silver offered at the mints at the historic ratio of 16 to 1. International bimetallism was supported by high scientific opinion, and the American bimetallists believed that if America started on that course alone she could do so without injury, or even with profit, and that other nations would follow. These Silver men held that the demonetization of silver in 1873 was a serious mistake; to them it was "the crime of '73,"—an act that had been passed surreptitiously and corruptly at the behest of the creditor classes, without any public demand or without exciting public notice; the result had been an appreciation in gold or

The "Silver
Party"

Bimetallism

a fall of prices and great hardship to the producing classes. The bimetallists based their demand for the free coinage of silver as well as of gold upon an alleged insufficiency of metallic money for the increasing necessities of a growing population and an expanding commerce. They held that the value of money is measured by the other things for which it exchanges; that to maintain a stable dollar is to maintain a general level of prices, as nearly as possible; a continued fall of prices indicates a growing scarcity of money (relative to business), and is productive of disaster, the loss of property under the burden of debt, and the discouragement of enterprise. They asserted that from 1873 to 1896 the general level of prices fell throughout the gold-using world about fifty per cent.; that is, the value of the gold dollar had increased one hundred per cent. in a quarter of a century; this added value of gold was partly due to the increased demand upon it for money uses, and if silver bullion had fallen in price during this time, that was because it could not be coined into money. The monetary demand formerly placed on silver was transferred to gold, and the bimetallists contended that the fall in prices, or the rise of gold, could be best stopped by an increase of metallic money, and that this increase could be furnished by opening the mints again to the coinage of both silver and gold. While the same result would be produced by a vast increase of the supply of gold (the one metal retaining the privilege of unlimited coinage), yet this was an event not to be expected, and rising prices and prosperity could best be restored by restoring silver to coinage.¹ The Silver men professed

¹ The end which the Silver men had in view, the increased money supply, was brought about within ten or fifteen years by the unexpected

to hold this view not because they were "friends of silver," or wished to "do something for silver," but because they believed in the quantitative theory of money,—the more money the less a given amount will bring in products, and vice versa; that the law of supply and demand operates on *all* commodities, money included; and if both gold and silver might be brought to the mints and be coined, an increase in the supply of either would increase the joint quantity and would, therefore, prevent the downward tendency in prices. Such is a brief, though necessarily inadequate, statement of the bimetallic contention.¹ It will be seen that upon the money question there was an obvious basis of union between the Populists and the Silver men.

For twenty years prior to 1896, the discussion over bimetallism and silver had divided parties and the country. The bimetallists were supported by the opinion of many students of finance, **The Struggle to Restore Silver to the Coinage, 1878-1896** by the material interests of the silver-mining States, by the Greenback and Populist demand for more money, by the views of certain labor leaders and organizations, and by Farmers' Alliances and debtors struggling to pay mortgages on the farms. While they were not able

and enormous increase in the gold supply. This brought more than \$1,000,000,000 more of money into circulation, and rising prices and the increased cost of living came with an alarming force, especially to the classes with fixed incomes. The dollar of 1914 could buy only what fifty-eight cents could buy in 1894. So the "fifty-cent dollar" with which the Silver men were threatening the country came in under the gold standard. The financial question is largely a question of prices, and that is largely a question of money supply. Experience is weightier in the long run than campaign argument.

¹ See C. A. Towne, *American Review of Reviews*, Sept., 1900.

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to secure from Congress the repeal of the Act of 1873 and the consequent full restoration of silver to the mints, they were able to force a compromise from the gold standard or "sound money" party. On February 28, 1878, the Bland-Allison Act was passed over the veto of President Hayes. A bill providing

**The Bland-
Allison Act,
1878**

for the free and unlimited coinage of silver had passed the House in November, 1877, in answer to a strong public demand. When this Bland free-coinage act came up to the Senate it was amended there, as a means of preventing its passage, on a report offered to the Senate by Senator Allison of Iowa, from the Finance Committee of the Senate, by a provision that the Government should purchase monthly from \$2,000,000 to \$4,000,000 worth of silver bullion for coinage into dollars. At this time the bullion in the silver dollar was worth about ninety-two cents. Holders of the silver coin were authorized to deposit it with the United States Treasurer and to receive therefor certificates of deposit known as silver certificates. In the same year the celebrated

**The Mat-
thews Reso-
lution, 1877**

Matthews Resolution was passed by Congress, declaring that all bonds of the United States "are payable in silver dollars of 412½ grains and that to restore such dollars as a full legal tender for that purpose is not a violation of public faith or the rights of creditors."

The Bland-Allison Act was in operation from 1878 to 1890, during which time \$2,000,000 in silver was coined each month, the minimum amount authorized by law. This was not satisfactory to the free-coinage sentiment, and in 1890 the Silver men secured the passage of another free-coinage act by the Senate, as a substitute for an act from the House increasing silver

purchases. In conference committee a compromise was agreed to which was reported to the Senate by Senator Sherman of Ohio. This was the so-called Sherman Act of July 14, 1890, which stopped the coinage of silver dollars as provided for in the Bland-Allison Act, and provided for the purchase of silver bullion to the amount of 4,500,000 ounces each month. Against this bullion, Treasury notes were to be issued, redeemable in gold or silver coin at the option of the Secretary of the Treasury. These notes were made a legal tender in payment of all debts, public and private, and receivable for all customs, taxes, and all public dues. It was also declared in this act to be "the established policy of the United States to maintain the two metals on a parity with each other upon the present legal ratio, or such ratio as may be provided by law." This language was interpreted by the Treasury Department, both under Republican and Democratic administrations, as guaranteeing gold payments, if desired by the holder of Government paper, and the new Treasury notes were treated as gold obligations. That is, the Treasury refused to exercise its option to pay silver, and this displeased the Silver men. Under the Sherman Act \$155,000,000 of Treasury notes were issued against silver bullion.

The Sherman Silver Purchase Act, 1899

"Maintaining the Parity"

Thus, by the Bland-Allison Act of 1878 and the Sherman Act of 1890 the Silver party had forced into circulation about \$450,000,000 of silver money. The currency had been expanded, but by no means as much as the Silver party and the paper inflationists desired. The question now was, in 1893, whether these silver notes were to be discontinued and the country

Extent of Silver Issues, 1878-1893

5112

brought definitely to the gold standard, or whether the policy of still further expanding the currency by free silver should obtain. For thirty years

**The Financial Struggle
Had Resulted
in a Series
of Com-
promises
between
Conflicting
Interests**

neither party to the financial controversy was able to have its way. The gold-standard policy, promoted chiefly by the banking and creditor classes, the money-lending sections, and the conservative business interests of the country standing for strict integrity in public and private contracts, opposed further expanding of the currency by silver and paper issues. They held that the country had absorbed all the silver money it could hold; that to pursue silver coinage or to increase it would inevitably bring the Treasury to the silver standard and throw the country into financial confusion. This would mean national repudiation and dishonor. With them it was not a question of more money, but of "sound money"; whatever money we had should be "as good as gold," and, at all hazards, the public credit should be maintained at the highest standard; that is, all Government obligations should be exchangeable for gold, the money of the high-class nations of the world. The expanding or inflation policy, promoted chiefly by the debtor and poorer classes and by the agricultural and less wealthy sections, sought to maintain a steady relation between money and products; and they held that in its expansive qualities the currency should keep pace with population and trade; and whether there should be more or less of money issued was a Government question, not a banking question,—that is, it was a question of public policy to be determined by the political agencies and officials of the people and not by the officials and interests of private financial corporations. The financial

controversy was, then, in a sense, a struggle between classes to determine the control and regulation of the volume of money, with the contending forces well represented in both the parties. The campaign of 1896 was an attempt to divide the voters on this line of cleavage. The silver question was pushed to the front for party purposes, but to the social reformer the conflict had a larger aspect: It was a struggle for the control of the *medium* of exchange, the *means* of exchange, and *land monopolies* as great agencies in exchange and in production.

In 1892, the constituencies of both parties were divided on the financial controversy. The campaign of that year was fought on other lines,—chiefly on the line of the tariff. The Populists alone were outspoken and aggressive on the money question. Both of the old parties adopted evasive, not to say two-faced, resolutions on the financial issue. The Republicans asserted that the “American people, from tradition and interest, favor bimetallism, and the Republican party demands the use of both gold and silver as standard money.” This was a bid for the Silver vote. Then followed, in deference to the Gold men, —“with such restrictions and under such provisions, to be determined by legislation, as will secure the maintenance of the parity of values of the two metals, so that the purchasing and debt-paying power of the dollar, whether of silver, gold, or paper, shall be at all times equal.”¹

Parties,
Silver, and
the “Par-
ity,” 1892

The Democrats asserted:

“We hold to the use of both gold and silver as the standard money of the country, and to the coinage of both gold and

¹ Republican Platform, 1892.

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silver without discriminating against either metal or charge for mintage."

This part of the artful and dodging platform was meant for use among Silver men and farmers in the West. Then followed:

"but the dollar unit of coinage of both metals must be of equal intrinsic and exchangeable value, or be adjusted through international agreement or by such safeguards of legislation as shall insure the maintenance of the parity of the two metals and the equal power of every dollar at all times in the markets and in the payment of debts."¹

This was to justify those who wished to maintain the gold standard.

The Populists had the advantage of unity of purpose and of knowing what they believed. The money question, in its many aspects, they looked upon as one of the greatest in the history of civilization, as one most vitally affecting social happiness, and they were striving hard in the South and West to win voters of both parties to their views.

The Democratic party, in order to heal or to avoid divisions, pushed the tariff question to the front in the campaign of 1892, and Mr. Cleveland was elected chiefly upon that issue. Although elected on the issue of reducing tariff taxation, on which his party was fairly well united, early after his inauguration he convened Congress into extraordinary session for purposes of financial legislation, on which his party was hopelessly divided. His policy was to prevent further silver coinage, to stop expanding the currency, and to borrow whatever gold was necessary to make gold

¹ Democratic Platform, 1892.

payments on all forms of Government paper. To maintain the gold standard he increased the bonded debt by \$262,000,000, refused to use silver in Government payments, vetoed a measure for further silver coinage; and used the patronage of his Administration to secure Congressional votes for the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act without substituting another for financial relief. All these acts were directly hostile to and antagonized by the Silver and Populist sentiment within the Democratic party. The party was disrupted, and in the West and South the great bulk of it refused to follow Mr. Cleveland's leadership. In the elections of 1894 the Democrats were defeated by overwhelming majorities. Legislative and Congressional districts in the West that had never been known to elect Republicans did so that year. The Republicans carried the House of Representatives by more than two thirds majority. The Populist vote increased to nearly two million. Though members of the Administration and other Democrats in office, or in quest of patronage, abandoned their previous advocacy of free silver coinage, other Democrats, in Congress and out, like Altgeld of Illinois, Bland of Missouri, Blackburn of Kentucky, Bryan of Nebraska, and Turpie of Indiana, opposed the Administration and set about to control the organization of the Democratic party and the next National Convention. They were aided in this by Silver clubs, the Bimetallic League, by *Coin's Financial School* and other popular pamphlets on the money question, and by general Democratic dissatisfaction. The growth of labor organizations, the spread of socialistic agitation, the oppression of the corporations, the great railroad strikes of 1894, and the employment of the soldiery by Mr. Cleveland to repress the

strikers, the hard times and calamities of other strikes and labor troubles, and, above all, the unprecedented hardship of the severe financial panic of 1893, for which Mr. Cleveland's Administration was unjustly held responsible, all tended in the same direction,—toward discontent and revolt.

It was hardly expected that Mr. Cleveland would be beaten and repudiated within the Convention of his own party in 1896. The managers of the People's party fully expected that both the old parties would be under the control of the "trusts and the gold bugs," and they therefore placed their Convention after the conventions of both the old parties, in the expectation of gathering into the Populist ranks all the bolting Silver and anti-monopolist Republicans and Democrats and thus increasing its two million votes to the five and a half millions necessary to elect. In 1872, the Liberal Republicans who represented a bolt against their party Administration, held an early Convention, and the Democratic Convention which followed had to face the alternative of a hopeless contest or an endorsement of the candidates and platform of the Liberal Republicans. The Democrats accepted the course that the Independent Republicans had marked out for them. But in 1896 the course of events took a different turn. The Populists were left to endorse the Democrats or to run a second candidate representing, essentially, the same spirit and purpose. The Republican Convention was first to meet, and its leaders were still expecting to make the tariff the dominant issue in the campaign. When the Convention refused to accept a resolution favoring the use of both gold and silver as equal standard money and pledging its power to secure free and unrestricted coinage of both metals at the ratio of 16

to 1, Senator Teller of Colorado led a Silver revolt. He was followed by a contingent representing Silver Republicans from the West who were ready to unite with the party that would give unequivocal support and the best promise of success to their cause. These represented one wing of the new combination that was forming.

In the struggle for the control of the Democratic Convention, the Silver Democrats and those who were opposing the gold-standard policy of Mr. Cleveland controlled the State conventions in the important middle States of Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, and the Democratic Convention met with its Silver wing in control of more than two thirds of the delegates, much to the surprise and consternation of the Eastern section of the party. Thirty Democratic State conventions had declared for free silver coinage. The Democrats felt that the time for "straddling" platforms on the money question had passed. The Democratic Convention declared the money question to be paramount to all others; that "gold and silver together were the money of the Constitution; that the demonetizing act of 1873 was without the approval of the American people; that it had resulted in an appreciation of gold or a fall of prices; that gold monometallism, a British policy, had locked fast the prosperity of an industrial people in the paralysis of hard times," and they demanded "the free and unlimited coinage of both gold and silver at the present legal ratio of sixteen to one, without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation, and that silver, equally with gold, shall be a full legal tender for all debts, public and private." They asserted that Congress alone had power to issue money and that banking corporations should be re-

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strained from doing so; all paper money should be issued by the Government. They denounced the income-tax decision of the Supreme Court as contrary to the "uniform decisions of that body for one hundred years," and they declared that it was

"the duty of Congress to use all the constitutional power which remains after that decision, or which may come from its reversal by the court as it may hereafter be constituted, so that the burdens of taxation may be equally and impartially laid, to the end that wealth may bear its due proportion of the expenses of the Government."

They denounced

"arbitrary interference by Federal authorities in local affairs,¹ as a violation of the Constitution and a crime against free institutions, and we especially object to government by injunction as a new and highly dangerous form of oppression by which Federal judges, in contempt of the laws of the States and rights of citizens, become at once legislators, judges, and executioners";

and the platform demanded trial by jury in certain cases of contempt.

These are the main features of the celebrated "Chicago Platform of 1896." On this platform the party nominated Mr. William J. Bryan of Nebraska for President, —a man who believed thoroughly in the righteousness of his cause and who represented fully the spirit and purpose of the Convention.

It was expected that the Populists would ratify and support this platform and nomination. But there were "Middle-of-the-Road" Populists who refused to cooperate. They wished to "keep in the middle of the road," without fusion or alliance with any other party,

¹ Referring to the Chicago strike troubles of 1894.

and they would maintain their own organization, have a separate, independent platform and ticket. The Populist Convention, meeting a few weeks after the Democratic Convention had adjourned, endorsed Mr. Bryan's nomination, but the "Middle-of-the-Roaders" were strong enough to prevent the Convention from accepting Mr. Sewall, the candidate of the Democrats for Vice-President, and Mr. Thomas Watson of Georgia was named instead. This complicated the situation.¹

The combination against the gold standard and the "money power"—of Silver Republicans, Populists, and Democrats—was still further prevented by a bolt from the Democrats. The gold wing of the Democracy, the supporters of Mr. Cleveland's policy, who had been defeated in the regular Democratic Convention, organized a movement in opposition to Mr. Bryan. Thousands of conservative old-school Democrats, who looked upon the Chicago platform as "revolutionary"; who deplored what seemed to them a menacing attack on the Supreme Court; who were fearful of the socialistic tendencies of their party; who were opposed to further enlargement of governmental activities in the control of transportation and commercial monopolies, united in this movement. A convention was held under the name of the "National Democratic Party," and John M. Palmer of Illinois was nominated for President and Simon B. Buckner of Kentucky for Vice-President. It declared for the gold standard and denounced the regular Democrats as Populists. As a "National Democratic Party" it was but a temporary movement.

¹ The "Middle-of-the-Road" Populists, or the anti-fusionists, disliked the combination with the Democrats in 1896. They continued the organization of their party and in 1900 they nominated Wharton Barker for President and cast 50,000 votes. The organization lingered a few more years and then disappeared from the field of politics.

It appeared but for one campaign and the regular Democrats looked upon it as merely a temporary resort to induce Democrats to withhold their votes from Mr. Bryan. But its Convention was managed, for the most part, by able and upright men who wished to register their protest against the action of the regular Convention and at the same time retain their standing as Democrats. They spoke out boldly in approval of "the fidelity, patriotism, and courage with which President Cleveland has fulfilled his public trust," of his "wisdom and energy in the maintenance of civil order and the enforcement of the laws," and of his "sturdy persistence in upholding the credit and honor of the nation." These Gold Democrats had no disposition to publish to the country merely a vote-catching platform, and upon the financial issue it was their purpose to speak out with no uncertain sound. They wished a money that would stand an "international test" of soundness, that would pay foreign debts and not prove to be a currency forced into circulation by the fiat of the home government and which would force out of circulation the more valuable metal demanded by other nations. The movement was shown to have represented the sentiments of more than one hundred thousand Democratic voters throughout the country who were unwilling to vote for either of the old parties. The majority of the Gold Democrats voted directly for the Republican candidate in order to make sure of Mr. Bryan's defeat. The Silver Republicans who, in control of the Silver party, nominated Mr. Bryan, are to be looked upon in the same light, as maintaining the form of a third party as the best maneuver for securing the defeat of the regular Republican candidate, Mr. McKinley. They soon afterwards

merged formally into the Democratic party. The National Democrats and the Silver Republicans were third-party stalking horses, though the Silver Republicans directly nominated the candidate that they favored.

The Gold Democrats of 1896 were conservatives. They favored the old ways, in that they opposed enlarging the scope of government. Both the Cleveland and the Bryan elements in the Democratic party claimed to be Jeffersonian, and the lineal inheritors of Jacksonian Democracy. The Gold wing were regarded by their opponents as standing for the wealthy, the aristocratic, and privileged classes of the country, and it was against these that Jefferson and Jackson contended. To the Bryan Democracy the struggle was against plutocracy, against the subtle control and corruptions of wealth. To the Cleveland Democracy it was a struggle against socialism, disorder, dishonesty, and anarchy. The radical, progressive, social democracy represented by Mr. Bryan had now come to look upon government not merely as a means of repression, as it was regarded in Jefferson's day (who therefore sought to prevent the enlargement of governmental powers), but as an agency of a democratic state for the promotion of the people's interests. With this new and larger, if not truer, democratic tendency in the party it drew to its support in 1896 many who had never supported it before,—those who felt that the greatest danger to the nation was in the domination of the Government by a commercial and corrupt plutocracy. On the other hand, the Democratic party lost the support of its millionaires and moneyed men, and of many conservative citizens, many of its best and most substantial supporters, who felt that menacing danger

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to the country was in the socialistic spirit, and that it would be safer to put into power a more conservative party which would be more disposed to guard the interests of property and business. The business interests of the country were aroused against the new democracy.

Thus in the agitations, changes, and uncertainties of 1896 the Republicans became the conservative party of the country, and under the vigorous leadership of the chairman of the National Republican Committee, Mr. Marcus A. Hanna, of Ohio, who organized, managed, and financed Mr. McKinley's campaign for the presidency, the Republican appeal was made not only to those who were interested in the protective tariff and so-called "sound money," but to conservative business men generally; to the banking interests; to the great insurance interests; to the trusts and combinations of capital; to the managers of great railways; to manufacturers, and to their wage-earners whose fears were wrought upon by the threat of closed factories and suspended industries, or whose hopes were aroused by the promise of returning prosperity. It was the argument of profits, wages, and a "full dinner pail" and it was contended that these blessings could come only by the prosperity of the great business enterprises of the country. Politics and business were to go hand in hand, and under the policy of Mr. Hanna, the most forceful personage of the McKinley régime, "big business" was to be a potent factor in the governmental policies of the Republican party. The Gold Democrats stood by consenting to McKinley's election, or openly promoting it in order to defeat the radical democracy of Bryan; though their plan was to recover control of the Democratic party and restore it to conservative policies. This was destined to keep the

Democratic party for some years to come what it had been for some years past,—a divided and distracted party, with its two wings pulling in opposite directions, each struggling for the control of the party conventions and party machinery. With the Republican party committed to conservative ways and to the interest of corporate business, to investments and manufacturing enterprises, the radicals in politics could reasonably claim that the Democratic party must either go forward in its radicalism or make way for a new radical party. No very great foresight was needed to predict that the attempt to bring back the Democratic party to the conservative platform and leadership of 1892 would add greatly to the growth of the new Socialist Democracy and to the unrest of the more radical and positive democratic forces that would demand new ventures and progressive measures even at the expense of the permanent defeat and death of the party. In the light of such conditions it may be better understood how the ardent supporter of Mr. Bryan could feel that the success of his cause was essential to saving the Democratic party from dissolution, and how the social democratic movement of the People's party and of this New Democracy ushered in a new era in party history. This era was also destined to bring about a schism and a democratic radicalism within the Republican party from which the conservative and vested interests of the country were to be made to feel that the Bryan Democracy of which they had at first been so fearful might be a relief and a haven of refuge.

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CHAPTER IX

THE PROGRESSIVE PERIOD

THE Spanish War and our colonial expansion brought into paramount importance a new issue in 1900, —whether the new colonial policy brought on by the war should be maintained. On that issue the Democrats were conservative while the Republicans stood for a departure,—for the control, outside of the Constitution, of subject peoples across seas, in the interest of expansion and commerce. The Democratic party was fairly well united in opposition to our foreign colonial policy, especially in the Philippines. But on the domestic problems touching monopolies of land, money, and transportation the struggle and division within the Democratic party continued. The conservatives, or “reorganizers,” represented by able and astute leaders and men of large affairs, capable managers of great enterprises, and represented also by the class of politicians who care very little about what policies and principles the party asserts if only they can gain a “victory” and get the offices,—these favored a non-committal policy in the social and industrial struggle. They would appeal to the support of moneyed men. They would therefore do nothing to disturb the promotion of great capitalistic enterprises and combinations. They favored the abandonment of all agitation for the in-

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come tax and other radical propositions for the taxation of corporate wealth, and an abandonment of opposition to "government by injunction." They would check any tendency toward more government establishments and a larger control of business,—of savings-banks, of a parcels post, of inter-State commerce, of the telegraph and the railroads. This meant that upon the industrial and social issues in our domestic politics the Democratic party should be brought substantially to the ground of its opponents, that it should be again a conservative party, and that party contests should be waged on general principles of opposition to the Administration in favor of a minimum amount of government, and for the old doctrine of a "tariff for revenue only." The conservatives sought to reorganize and harmonize the Democratic party to restore the party conditions of 1892,—with the conservatives in control. It was an attempt to yoke Mr. Cleveland and Mr. Bryan in the same party harness, where certainly they did not belong.

The conservative wing of the Democratic party regained control of it in 1904 and nominated for the presidency Judge Alton B. Parker, of New York, who sought to commit the party to the gold standard and to displace radicalism by a "safe and sane" leadership. The party recognized that the money question was in abeyance and appealed to the country against the control of government and industry by corporate wealth and the trusts, but Parker's overwhelming defeat in the election indicated that Bryan's followers within the party were not reconciled to support a leadership and a policy essentially the same as that against which they had previously revolted. It was obvious that the party was doomed to more disastrous

defeats while under the control of the Eastern conservatives than it had suffered under Mr. Bryan; and the demoralized conservatives without a serious struggle surrendered the control of the party to the radicals in 1908, and the party put forward Mr. Bryan again in his third race for the presidency.

But Parker's defeat indicated something still more significant, namely, that the Democratic party was facing a condition in the country and a leadership within the Republican party quite different from what the preceding decade had presented.

President McKinley was renominated by the Republicans in 1900 without the slightest opposition. His party was united and harmonious. The country had entered upon an era of commercial and industrial prosperity. High protection had been reenacted by the Dingley Act of July, 1897. This substantially restored the McKin-

Prosperity
and Repub-
lican Har-
mony in
1900

ley duties of 1890 and even carried the protection policy farther than had ever been known before. The protectionists were quite ready to attribute the returning prosperity to the renewal of their policy. The gold standard was definitely recognized in 1899, and the money question, which had so disturbed both parties and the country in 1896 and before, had now fallen into the background, while "expansion and imperialism" resulting from the Spanish War had brought a new paramount issue to the front. The Democrats, for the sake of consistency and Mr. Bryan's candidacy, again declared for the free coinage of silver in 1900, but the depression and low prices of which they had complained were disappearing, as they claimed, not by governmental policies, but by the forces of science and discovery. Money had increased in volume and prices

had risen, and Mr. Bryan and the Democrats could, therefore, argue with some force and reason that the solution of the money problem had been essentially the one they had urged, although the increased coinage had come not from opening the mints to silver but from an unexpected increase in the world's supply of gold.¹ For rising prices and returning prosperity the Democratic Silver men found a cause, not in the tariff, but in the economic quantitative theory of money which was now being so forcibly illustrated by the new supply of gold and its effect.

Whatever may have been the cause of the returning prosperity, the Democrats could not make much headway against the party in power under its prevailing influence.² "Business is prospering," "Let well enough alone," "Remember the Cleveland panic and the soup houses of '93," were some of the Republican campaign cries in 1900. The workingmen were employed, wages were better, farmers were getting good prices for their products, business men were again beginning to make money, new industrial and commercial enterprises were on foot, and under these circumstances opposition to expansion and "anti-imperialism" did not prove popular issues, and the Republican Administration of McKinley was easily reelected to power. Mr. Hanna,

¹ See pp. 156-157.

² It was related of Mr. Champ Clark in his campaign for reelection to Congress in 1902, that he was speaking fervently to a rural audience in defense of the "immortal principles of liberty and equality" voiced in the Declaration of Independence, and against the dangers of "imperialism," of the violated Constitution, and of the wrong done to subject peoples across seas, when at the close of his eloquent plea an old Missouri farmer replied, "Well, Champ, I allow the country can stand it as long as cattle is four-fifty on the hoof." The story may illustrate the difficulty of making campaign headway against favoring prices and prosperity.

the political "King-maker," was still in control, at the head of the Republican organization.

President McKinley served but six months of his second term. He was the third Republican President lost by assassination, and by the calamity of his death in September, 1901, Theodore Roosevelt became President and the official leader of his party. The change was destined to bring a new era, a "swing of the pendulum" within the Republican party from conservatism to radicalism. Roosevelt as President had not been within the plans of the official leaders and the controlling forces of his party.¹ Roosevelt was Governor of New York and in that position he had aroused the antagonism of large corporate interests by securing the passage of an act imposing taxes upon corporate franchises. Senator Platt and certain interests which Platt, New York's "easy boss" in control of the Republican forces there, was willing to serve, were anxious to displace Roosevelt from the governorship, and they availed themselves of the opportunity to help put him into the vice-presidency, a place of quiet uselessness and retirement. Hanna and McKinley were not favorable to Roosevelt's nomination for the vice-presidency. They looked upon him as an "unsafe" man, but the combination of influences behind Roosevelt's nomination, including his popularity with the Western delegates, was too strong even for Roosevelt's protests and Hanna's resistance; Roosevelt had to yield and the Administration forces withdrew opposition and consented to Roosevelt's going on the ticket with McKinley.

When he became President, Roosevelt announced that he would consider his Administration the continuation

¹ See p. 316.

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of McKinley's and that he would carry out the policies of the more conservative Republican leader whom the country had twice chosen against the radical leader of the Democracy. This he may be said to have done, as the achievements placed to the credit of the Republican party in the two administrations—the first of McKinley's and the first of Roosevelt's—do not present any policies upon which the two leaders would have materially differed. On all the policies and results of the Spanish War, the government of the island possessions, the gold standard, the protective tariff, the open-door policy in China, the expansion of American trade,—on these and other public measures of McKinley's term, Roosevelt and McKinley were in full agreement.¹ The two men, however, were of different types and tendencies. The difference was one of method, habit, and state of mind. McKinley had been complaisant, pliable, accommodating, seeking party harmony, more disposed to please the politicians and to accept the view that in clashes of opinion and purposes between the Executive and party leaders in Congress the President should follow rather than lead. Roosevelt demanded presidential leadership. He was determined, energetic,

¹ On the Tariff, while he was in general sympathy with his party, Roosevelt made no decisive record, and judging from McKinley's last speech on Reciprocity it is probable that the former leader, if he had been spared, would have done much more than Roosevelt did to advance tariff revision. Reciprocity and freer trade agreements with other nations had been within the plans and close to the heart of both Blaine and McKinley. But Roosevelt failed under pressure from high protectionists like Aldrich and Hanna (with whom at first he sought to get into friendly and working relations) to stand up stoutly or with any degree of positiveness for this policy. When he left the presidency he left Reciprocity and the Tariff for Taft to wrestle with. The "Tariff was Taft's problem," as he expressed it, and he has been severely reproached for giving no aid on that subject to his successor, while he distinctly embarrassed Taft on Reciprocity and Arbitration.

inclined to the unusual and spectacular, with certain notable popular qualities and with a remarkable knowledge of all classes and conditions of men among his countrymen. He was a masterful politician who knew how to make "news" and appeal to public sentiment through the medium of his public message and the press; and he was impatient, some said dictatorial, toward the older leaders and politicians of his party, who, in turn, looked upon Roosevelt with suspicion and fear.

McKinley's term to which Roosevelt succeeded had not come to a close before a serious breach appeared between the new Republican President and the "Old Guard" of Senatorial and Congressional leaders of the Republican party, who had behind them the machine forces of the party. These official Republicans, the organization men, the professional delegates and the men who did the party work, as well as the men who represented "big business" in public life, were not favorable to Roosevelt. They saw only trouble for the party by offending the moneyed interests from which they had been accustomed to draw the party "sinews of war." They looked upon Roosevelt as a "disturber" of party harmony; they wished things to go on as they had been, believing that, whatever happened, the rank and file of the party would stand by the old party flag carried by the "Old Guard." These forces cast about for ways and means of defeating Roosevelt for renomination in 1904, encouraged by the tradition that no man who had inherited the presidency could ever win it. They perceived that the best agent and leader offering any hope of success for their plans was the redoubtable captain Marcus A. Hanna who had carried the party twice to victory, and who had shown

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that he knew how to carry elections and to reward the "boys" for their party services. He had no "fads and reforms" to promote and he would stand for the old tariff and the old ways of getting on in politics. But Hanna's death in the early part of 1904 caused a collapse of the plans of these politicians who were at heart most anxious to set Roosevelt aside. There was no other rallying point for the opposition to Roosevelt.

In addition to this turn of the tide in Roosevelt's favor, before the close of his inherited term his name had become connected in the popular mind with certain notable achievements and ideas that gave him a remarkable personal popularity. He knew the psychology of politics and he appreciated the great advantage of press agency and publicity in appealing for popular support. Political, social, and industrial abuses were being exposed, such as the Insurance scandals and the Beef Trust packing-house scandals, and Roosevelt, sympathetic with social justice and equal rights, ready for political adventure and bold endeavor, was in a position to turn to his advantage, without assuming the responsibility for, the "muckraking" of magazine writers and newspaper correspondents. The result was that in spite of the secret dislike and opposition of most of his party leaders, he was renominated and reelected by greater popular and electoral majorities than any President before him had ever received (1904). No doubt many Bryan Democrats voted for him, partly out of dislike of Parker and what they considered the reactionary control of their party in that year, and partly out of their approval of Roosevelt's purposes and policies.¹

¹ Bryan accused Roosevelt of stealing his policies, and Roosevelt seemed disposed to "cut the ground from under" Bryan by appealing to radical democratic forces.

When Roosevelt came to the presidency "by his own right," the struggle continued to determine what forces were to control the Republican party. There was now almost open war between the President and the distinguished leaders of the "Old Guard" in Senate and House. They represented radically different and divergent tendencies in politics. By conviction, composition, and antecedents, as well as in political affiliation, the "Old Guard," as represented in the Senate by Mr. Aldrich, the mentor and spokesman for large corporate interests, and in the House by Speaker Cannon and his "steering committee" on rules, were deeply conservative. They were denounced as "Reactionaries" and "Standpatters," as they were disposed to stand fast for the old ways, for capital and property, for vested interests, and especially for the high tariff which, as they contended, was the essential cause of all American material prosperity. Roosevelt's sympathies were with the "Progressive Republicans." He was not as outspoken or as radical in the progressive movement as Senator La Follette, of Wisconsin, who had made himself entirely *persona non grata* to the old Republican leaders in the Senate. But Roosevelt was awake to the dangers of American plutocracy and he clearly perceived the certainty of the moral decay to which mere commercialism and materialism in politics would lead the nation. He was a practical politician with forward-looking purposes and ideals, whose speech and actions at times and his failure to speak and act at other times were certain to arouse criticism and antagonism from both radicals and conservatives. But Roosevelt's disposition and temper were distinctly radical. His sympathies were constantly with the democracy, and he professed a desire to commit his party only to a

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moderate program of social reform, while expediency prompted him to a conservatism that would offer a reasonable middle ground between the corporate capitalism of Aldrich and the more radical socialism of Debs.

In Congress the radical "Progressive Republicans" were represented by Senators La Follette of Wisconsin, Dolliver and Cummins of Iowa, Beveridge of Indiana, Bristow of Kansas, Clapp of Minnesota, Bourne of Washington, Dixon of Montana, and Borah of Idaho. These and their co-laborers in the House became known as "Insurgents." They were in revolt against the old chiefs and had gone "on the war path," defying the old party leaders and "kicking over the party traces," in opposition to what they deemed the "one-man power" of the Speaker in the House and the "big business" capitalistic oligarchy in the Senate. These, the "Insurgents" asserted, were ruling the country and dictating its laws by a dangerous alliance of the capitalist and the politician, the millionaire and the boss. The President and the Progressives urged a railroad rate regulation bill, a pure food bill, a bureau of corporations, and other measures, designed to regulate, or to bring into publicity, large business organizations that were imposing upon the public. But if any of these bills passed the House they were smothered or amended out of form in the Senate. But the President by special messages and appeals to public opinion—that is by wielding the "big stick"—frequently forced reluctant acquiescence in Congress to certain progressive measures. It was made apparent to the Congressional leaders that the President had public sentiment and the rank and file of the party behind him, and by 1908, opposition to Roosevelt's policies within the party

was seen to be futile, while it was recognized that if Roosevelt himself would not again stand for reelection, none but a "Roosevelt Republican" who would pledge himself to continue the "Roosevelt policies" could hope to be nominated and elected.

The "Roosevelt policies" to which the Republican party now found itself fully committed, are to be seen partly in those achievements and ideas which had brought to Mr. Roosevelt his remarkable popularity and his vindication at the polls in 1904. He had vigorously denounced corporate abuses and shown sincere friendliness to labor unions; he had preached civic righteousness with great effect while the country was aroused by exposures of "graft" and corporate corruption in legislatures and elections; he had a "wild western" popularity and a "rough rider" war record in Cuba; he had pursued an energetic and effective policy toward Columbia and Panama and had begun the Great Canal; he had construed the Constitution broadly, assuming for the presidential office all powers not forbidden, instead of limiting his executive activities only to those powers that were specifically granted; he urged efficiency and reforms in the army and navy, cutting through the red tape of rank and bureaucracy; he fostered the navy and sent the fleet around the world impressing the Oriental nations with American prowess; he achieved a world-wide distinction by bringing about peace between Russia and Japan, for which he was awarded the Nobel prize; he had advocated the "square deal," and above all, in exemplification of it, he had boldly taken to task the railways and "coal barons" and, to the delight of a suffering public and the relief of the striking coal miners, he brought about the settlement of the anthracite coal strike by presidential inter-

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ference. Most of these things were to Roosevelt's credit with the people while he was still serving out "McKinley's term," and the remarkable majorities recorded for him in 1904 were looked upon more as a "Rooseveltian" victory than a mere Republican victory.¹

Roosevelt's second Administration came to be identified with the following, which may be added to the list of the "Roosevelt policies," though they were favored by men in all parties:

(1) Equal industrial opportunities and equal punishment for all illegal acts. Government must "shackle cunning" and bring to book the culpable rich malefactors.

(2) Government regulation of public-service corporations, especially the railways, which should be made to serve all equally.

(3) The development of waterways, to supplement and to help control the railways.

(4) The promotion of agriculture, by promoting small holdings of land and giving title to homesteaders.

(5) A strong navy, for the security of peace and the protection of our coast line, to be unified by the canal.

(6) Efficiency and publicity in government and the recognition of the obligations that men owe to one another, as capital to labor and labor to capital.

(7) The conservation movement, saving to the public, *under national authority*, the natural resources of the country,—water-power for irrigation, the forests, the mines, and ungranted homesteads.

William H. Taft, President Roosevelt's Secretary

¹ See *The Cyclopedia of Government and Politics*, edited by Professors McLaughlin and Hart (Appletons). The author's article on "The Republican Party."

Roosevelt made a breach in the Solid South in that year, carrying Missouri, and one electoral vote in Maryland.

of War, was nominated and elected President in 1908 largely through the influence of Roosevelt, and as one who would carry on these policies. One of his first official acts was to call Congress into extra session to revise the tariff, as revision had been promised in the party platform. Tariff revision had not been a distinctive Roosevelt policy,—he had seemed to evade the problem,¹—and the party was seriously divided on it. The Republican “Insurgents” and “Progressives,” as a rule, especially in the Middle West, led by Senator La Follette of Wisconsin, and Senator Cummins of Iowa, had for a number of years been demanding revision, favoring such modification of the schedules as might be required to prevent their affording shelter to monopolies; or in all cases where protection was employed to give the special interests of capital undue advantage, and to the injury of workingmen and consumers; or in cases where the profits on protected products were far in excess of the difference in labor cost at home and abroad. The revision affected by the Payne-Aldrich tariff bill of 1909 was brought about under the leadership of the “Standpatters” in Congress, chiefly of Cannon in the House and Aldrich in the Senate. While this bill was pending in Congress and was being shaped up by those whom it concerned, President Taft’s attitude toward Congress was seen to be quite different from that of Roosevelt. He was governed by the theory that the President should not interfere with the work of Congress; that he should leave Congress alone to do its own work in its own way; that the President might accept or reject what was put up to him, but that Congress should be independent of any Executive influence or control. President Taft accepted the

¹ See footnote, p. 178.

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Payne-Aldrich tariff and approved it to the country in a public speech as "one of the best tariff measures ever enacted,"¹ while it was denounced by the Progressive Republicans as a fraudulent revision,—a revision *upward* rather than *downward*, a revision in the interest of the "interests." The impression had gone out to the public, an impression that had been constantly cultivated by anti-protectionists in opposition to the Dingley Act of 1897, that special interests, through their control of Representatives and Senators, had arranged the schedules to suit themselves in their own business. Thousands among the rank and file even of the Republicans, helped on by the "Progressives" and their agitation, had come to believe that the great manufacturers and corporations were the chief beneficiaries of the tariff; that the Payne-Aldrich bill had made no change except in their interests; that "Sugar Senators," "Lumber Senators," "Steel Senators," "Railroad Senators" were still in control of Congress, and that the President, "a good man surrounded by men who knew what they wanted,"² was good-naturedly acquiescing, not wishing to break with Congress and the party leaders. It was known that under the Dingley act large and rich manufacturers in America were underselling foreign competitors in foreign markets, and it was charged that these forces were insisting by the Payne-Aldrich act that this unnecessary protection should be continued to save them from competition in the United States, by which they would be enabled to compel Americans to pay more for American goods than the foreigner was paying for them.

¹ Speech at Winona, Minn., 1909.

² Senator Dolliver, of Iowa, a Progressive Republican, so characterized President Taft.

Public sentiment was against such a "revision" of the tariff and after the enactment of the Payne-Aldrich bill the Republican party suffered a decisive defeat at the polls in the Congressional elections of 1910. They lost control of the House to the Democrats, while Republican "insurgency" in the West gained notable victories and recruits, especially in Wisconsin, Iowa, Michigan, Kansas, California, and Washington. President Taft, at the last session of the Republican Congress, urged a further revision of the tariff under the form of a reciprocity compact with Canada. His party refused to accept this, whereupon he immediately called an extra session (in April, 1911) of the newly elected Democratic Congress to consider reciprocity. The Democratic leaders and the Democratic House gave cordial support to a measure urged by a Republican President, but when Mr. Taft's Reciprocity Treaty came to the Republican Senate more Republican votes were cast against it than for it (24 to 21). Many high protection Republicans did not like it and it was antagonized by the "Insurgents," or "Progressive Republicans," on the claim that it was designed to promote special interests and was calculated to injure the interests of their agricultural constituents. It was passed only by means of Democratic support and it came to nothing upon its rejection by the Canadian voters.

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In this brief account there is revealed, to a degree, the causes of the serious division within the Republican party existing for nearly ten years and which, as a natural result, came to the open and fatal schism in organization and leadership leading to the final party disaster of 1912. The "Regulars" of the "Old Guard," upon the one hand, and the "Insurgents" or "Progressives,"

upon the other, were disliking and fighting one another more than either disliked and fought the Democrats. President Taft, upright, moderate, fair-minded, judicial, with a natural aversion to faction and strife, sought, as he said, to "keep in the middle of the road," to keep the good-will of all and to allay the struggle; but he found it impossible to reconcile the conflicting forces within his party. He may be compared to Buchanan who in 1858 and 1860, fearful and timid, if not indifferent, in the presence of great issues that were pressing for solution, sought to keep the peace between warring elements within his party and between the sections; and, like Buchanan, President Taft finally found himself and his political fortunes committed to a passing leadership, to backward-looking rather than to forward-looking men, to men whose policies and leadership the majority of his party and of his countrymen were but awaiting another opportunity to reject. The Progressives, while antagonizing their party President on Canadian reciprocity, claimed to stand for more radical and more equitable tariff revision, and they were also pushing forward in their States certain popular movements within the party,—the initiative and referendum, the popular election of United States Senators, the income tax, popular control of the Judiciary, enlarged government functions, larger social control of public utilities, direct nominations, and larger popular control in the election of delegates to State and National Conventions. To President Taft's conservative and legal mind, many of these proposals seemed like an attempt "to pull down those things which have been regarded as the pillars of the temple of freedom and republican government, and to reconstruct our whole society on some new principle not definitely formulated

and with no intelligent or intelligible forecast of the great constitutional and statutory results to be attained.”¹

The strange anomaly in politics now appears within the Republican party, namely, that the aggressive and radical Roosevelt forces (calling themselves “Progressive Republicans”) who had brought about Taft’s nomination in 1908 were now bitterly opposing him, while the conservative wing of the party whom their opponents called “Standpatters” and “Reactionaries,” who had opposed and disliked Roosevelt and fought Taft’s nomination in 1908 to the limit of “practical politics,” were now rallying to the President’s support and were his chief reliance for renomination and re-election. These supporters liked him “for the enemies he had made” within the party; his opponents rejected him because of the new-made friends who were now so ardent in his support.²

The Progressive leaders first put forward Senator La Follette to “try out” the contest for the Republican nomination against Taft. But the conservatives and “Standpatters” had control of the party machinery; their men were placed in the organization where they “could do the most good” in securing delegates, and it soon became evident that while Mr. La Follette’s campaign might have some effective educational results, the “regulars” behind President Taft would easily accomplish his renomination. Under these circumstances the more implacable Progressives who were

¹ He referred to the “progressive” advocates of direct popular government in nominating and law-making as “political emotionalists and neurotics,” and as “extremists who would hurry us into a condition which would find no parallel except in the French Revolution.” Taft’s speech in New York City, February 12, 1912.

² A Progressive cartoon represented Taft, Cannon, Aldrich, and others as “carrying out the Roosevelt policies on a stretcher.”

bent on defeating President Taft at all hazards, and others who were much disappointed at the President's complacent assent to the obstruction of popular party measures and to the recovery of the control of the party by the conservative and machine forces, urged ex-President Roosevelt to enter the field against Taft and again become a candidate for the presidency. Eight Republican governors in a joint public letter, and a number of Progressive conferences, requested Mr. Roosevelt to accept their support and they urged the Republican voters in the States to appoint delegates favorable to Roosevelt's nomination. Mr. Roosevelt consented and a contest for the Republican nomination, by no means friendly, began between these two distinguished men who had formerly been close personal and political friends.

Under Progressive influences several of the States provided for presidential preference primaries, and in the contest for popular support within the party Mr. Roosevelt, as against Mr. Taft, carried all the primary States, except Massachusetts.¹ In a notable address before the Ohio Constitutional Convention,² Mr. Roosevelt declared himself a Progressive, as in favor of the sev-

¹ In Massachusetts a majority of the delegates elected to the State convention were favorable to Roosevelt, but he insisted upon their voting for Taft at the National Convention, since Taft had carried the popular vote of the State in the preferential primaries. Mr. La Follette had carried the primaries in two of the States, Wisconsin and North Dakota. In New York and Indiana the old irregular primaries, under the control of the party managers, had resulted favorably to Mr. Taft, and sharp practice was charged as to the methods pursued in these primaries. The Roosevelt forces asserted that Taft was the candidate of the "bosses" and the "interests," while the masses of the party preferred Roosevelt, as the legal preferential primaries had abundantly shown.

² Columbus Speech, "A Charter of Democracy." February 21, 1912.

eral policies which this faction of the party had been urging.¹ Boldly announcing his belief in a pure democracy, he urged support of all party and political devices calculated to make the representatives of the people more easily and certainly responsible to the people's will. In this confession of democratic faith he included the "recall of judicial decisions," which he explained to mean that "when a court decides a constitutional question, when it decides what the people as a whole can or cannot do, the people should have a right to recall that decision if they think it wrong." He held the judge to be as much the servant of the people as any other official, and he asserted that by the abuse of the power to declare laws unconstitutional the courts have become a law-making instead of a law-enforcing agency. Mr. Roosevelt asserted that he would especially apply this practice of the recall of judicial decisions within the States, and if the Supreme Court of a State declare a given statute null and void because in conflict with State or National Constitution, its opinion should be subject to revision by the people themselves. In this way the people would become the interpreters of their own constitution and be permitted to say what political policies they had permitted their legislatures to enact under it.²

¹ See pp. 184-185.

² In the "recall of judicial decisions" no one proposes that ordinary cases at law between litigants should be appealed from the judges for retrial before the people. That is an absurdity. But when *political* decisions are made and the court assumes to prevent a public policy "which the people through their legislatures have enacted on the ground that such a policy is unconstitutional, then by the opportunity to recall the decision" the people may decide whether they would so construe the Constitution as to permit such a policy, or law, to be enacted. It is a constructive amending power, if one wishes to speak of it so. It is a refusal to accept the *opinion* of the judge as to the

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The outcome of the contest for the control of the Republican National Convention was that the contending forces offered to the people two parties instead of one. The Roosevelt supporters asserted that the rank and file of the party had elected a majority of the delegates in their favor; that wherever the people had a chance they had expressed themselves overwhelmingly for Mr. Roosevelt, but that the "bosses" and "machine politicians" in control of the National Committee had unseated legally elected delegates and had "fixed" the Convention with a sufficient Taft majority. Complaint was especially made by Mr. Roosevelt's supporters that the majority against him was largely made up by the presence of delegates from the Southern States, who did not represent any considerable number of Republican votes, and that these States were like "rotten boroughs" that could contribute nothing to the election of the nominee; and that it was therefore evident that all that the Taft managers were trying to do was to defeat Roosevelt and retain control of the party without regard to popular desire or party success. On the other hand, the Taft supporters asserted that the committee's proceedings had been fair, regular, and in accordance with party usage; that the Roosevelt methods had been as bad as those of which he was complaining and the same as campaign managers had always resorted to; that four years before Roosevelt had used Southern delegates to accomplish his ends; that he had then a chance as the official leader of his party

permissibility of a public policy under the Constitution. Construction is as much a legislator's function or a citizen's function, as it is a judge's function. There is no reason why a judge's opinion of our constitutional rights and powers should be meekly submitted to by everybody else. See pp. 503, 506 sqq.

reform the disproportionate and inequitable representation of the Southern States, but that he had turned over this important reform as something that could wait a more convenient season"; that he had never had any serious objection to the Republican party if the party would accept him for its leader, but that when he was defeated in his contest for the nomination he then began to denounce the party as "corrupt"; and if Roosevelt, his opponents assert, had been able to control the National Committee and the Convention there would have been no bolt, and no new party could have been organized.

The scope of this chapter does not permit us to attempt a full account of the contents in the convention, nor to enter into the merits of this controversy. We can but notice the results. The National Committee settled the bulk of the contested delegations in favor of Mr. Taft, and, as a consequence, the Taft forces controlled the Convention. The Roosevelt delegates who had not been excluded from the Convention refused to take part in the proceedings, and when Taft's nomination was brought about and a com-

The wish is that this proposal to readjust Southern representation in the Republican party has been before the national conventions at some time for more than twenty-five years. It was proposed before a National Committee as early as 1883. Those in control of the convention at the time are never quite ready to accept the reform; or think it has wait. The minority faction who have lost out in the party race for the control of the Southern delegates are usually ready to urge it upon the controlling majority to their embarrassment, as Arthur Quay, an astute and unscrupulous politician, urged it in the convention of 1900, not for justice's sake but to harass Senator Hanna, who was then in control of the Southern delegations and of the Convention. Everybody admits that the misrepresentation is a glaring abuse, and it is now likely to be done away with. It is a sad commentary on the practical and convention methods of the past that it has lasted so long. See pp. 315-316.

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servative platform adopted, these delegates and their alternates, and the delegates whose claims to seats had been denied, with thousands of Roosevelt followers, held a meeting, denounced the Republican Convention as fraudulent, and resolved to call another convention to nominate a Progressive candidate. The 5th of August was named as the day and the "call" was issued to

"the people of the United States without regard to past political differences, who, through repeated betrayals, realize that to-day the power of the crooked political bosses and of the privileged classes behind them is so strong in the two old party organizations that no helpful movement in the real interest of our country can come out of either; who believe that a nation-wide progressive movement on non-sectional lines is desirable; and who believe in the right and capacity of the people to rule themselves."

This first convention of the "Progressive Party" met on August 5th and 6th according to the "call," and after adopting a platform containing the usual progressive demands nominated Theodore Roosevelt of New York for President and Hiram Johnson of California for Vice-President.¹

Meanwhile a struggle similar to that which had

¹ The Progressive party's platform, in addition to the well-known measures which the progressives in both parties had been urging (see pp. 161, 183-184), declared for equal suffrage for women; limitation and publicity of campaign funds; registration of lobbyists; publicity of committee hearings; exclusion of federal appointees from political activities; referendum on court decisions nullifying State legislation; physical valuation of railroads; and "an enlarged measure of social and industrial justice including industrial health and accident laws, limitation on child labor, minimum wage for women," etc. For the full platforms of the parties see the *World Almanac*, and for non-partisan accounts of the political campaign of 1912 see the *American Year Book* and the *International Year Book*.

divided the Republican party was going on within the Democratic party. The progressive Democrats were in essential agreement with the progressive Republicans. The real cleavage in party conflict ran *through* not *between* the old traditional parties. Mr. W. J. Bryan was the recognized leader of the progressive forces within the Democratic party. He had a larger personal following, because of the things for which he stood, than any other Democrat in the country; but he was not again a candidate for the presidential nomination. Governor Wilson, of New Jersey, was looked upon by the progressive Democrats as their most promising candidate. The National Committee and the machine forces within the Democratic party were opposed to Bryan (as the same forces within the Republican party were to Roosevelt) and they "turned him down" whenever a safe opportunity offered. When Bryan sought to carry his policies in the committee or in the preliminary organization of the Convention he was defeated; but in the Convention itself, where he could appeal openly to the delegates and to the country, the machine forces were not able successfully to combat his powerful leadership. The majority of the voting rank and file of the party were behind Bryan, and with this support and from the fact that he had been three times chosen to lead his party in presidential contests, he was easily the most powerful personality that appeared in the National Democratic Convention. He boldly defied the "bosses" and the "privilege-hunting interests of Wall Street," and at a crisis of the struggle in the Convention he threw his great influence to bring about the nomination of Governor Wilson.

The Republicans had chosen the conservative course in the nomination of Taft; the Democrats chose the

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more progressive course in the nomination of Wilson. Wilson was Governor of New Jersey and under his leadership that State had been changed from a low condition of political servitude, boss-ridden and trust-ridden in the interest of corporate wealth, into one of the most progressive States in the Union. Governor Wilson had made a bold fight against the corrupt bipartisan combination that had woefully misgoverned New Jersey for many years. He spoke out and struck out for popular election of Senators, fair primaries, politics in the open, the initiative and referendum, a vigorous anti-trust policy, and other progressive measures. He was antagonized by the bosses and the vested interests. His nomination for President had been urged by certain influences and journalists in the East¹ known to be implacably hostile to Mr. Bryan; and Mr. Wilson himself, while President of Princeton College, had been in sympathy with the "Cleveland-Parker wing" of his party and had expressed a desire to find some respectable way of "knocking Mr. Bryan into a cocked hat." But Governor Wilson's experience in politics, his struggle with his party bosses, his grappling at close range with malign forces in government, his coming face to face with the pressing issues of the day,—these experiences brought him new light, and in the struggle within the party he found himself, as a sincere Democrat, in sympathy with, and his chief support in his presidential candidacy among, the "democratic Democrats" of the Bryan brand. His nomination was supported also among the "intellectuals," and by a large independent element of all parties, who were either in sympathy with his progressive policies or were anxious to find some one to supersede Bryan in Democratic leadership.

¹ Notably by Col. George Harvey, editor of *Harper's Weekly*.

Mr. Bryan in the midst of a fierce and dramatic struggle in the National Convention offered a resolution calling upon his party to prove its "fidelity to the people" and to declare itself "opposed to the nomination of any candidate for President who is the representative of, or under obligations to, J. Pierpont Morgan, Thomas F. Ryan, August Belmont, or any other member of the privilege-hunting and favor-seeking class," and Bryan demanded the withdrawal from the Convention of the delegates representing such interests. He advised his followers to support no man for President who was voted for by the New York delegation. This was in bold defiance of Tammany and an unprecedented personal denunciation of persons seated in, and of interests known to be represented in, the Convention. It excited Mr. Bryan's enemies within the party to a white heat of passionate anger. The majority of the delegates voted for the nomination of Speaker Champ Clark, of Missouri, for the presidency but the required two-thirds vote could not be obtained. The delegates from Nebraska, of whom Bryan was one, were under instructions to vote for Clark, but Bryan abandoned Clark's candidacy, saying that he "would not be a party to the nomination of any man, no matter who he may be or from what section of the country he comes, who will not, when elected, be absolutely free to carry out the anti-Morgan-Ryan-Belmont resolution and make his administration reflect the wishes and the hopes of those who believe in 'a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.'"¹ The Convention was evidently prepared to follow Bryan's leadership in his

¹ Speaker Clark denounced Bryan's "veiled aspersions" upon his character and pronounced his "implied accusations" as "both false and infamous."

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defiance of Tammany and the "vested interests." To the "regular" party man whose chief desire is for "harmony" his action seemed threatening and destructive; but Bryan's services in preventing Murphy, the Tammany chieftain, from securing the support of the delegates to Clark, Tammany's preliminary candidate, or to some other whom Murphy had in reserve, was one of the most splendid exhibitions of political courage and masterful leadership in the history of American politics. But the constructive work in securing Wilson's nomination was largely in other hands. Bryan's tactics headed off a stampede for Clark and made it possible for anti-Tammany Democrats in New York, represented by Thomas M. Osborne and others, to make it clear to the delegates that Murphy's ninety votes did not represent the true Democracy of the Empire State. The work was done by preventing the withdrawal of the leading candidates for the sake of "harmony" and the consequent nomination of some colorless man who "had made no enemies," —a "harmony" nominee who would doubtless have been approved, if not dictated, by the Tammany chief. When the Wilson managers refused to withdraw their candidate and Indiana was induced to shift its vote from Marshall to Wilson and Illinois and Kentucky followed that lead, Wilson's nomination was made secure.

Wilson, owing to the division among his opponents, was elected by the largest electoral majority any candidate had ever received.¹ Wilson was supported by,

¹ Taft carried eight electoral votes, four from Vermont and four from Utah. McCutcheon's cartoon in the Chicago *Tribune* represented the Republican Elephant as picking up two little peanuts. Roosevelt carried five States, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Minnesota, South Dakota,

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seemingly, a united party but especially by its progressive elements; by many Republicans who were afraid of Roosevelt; and by many Republican progressives who were satisfied with Wilson and who did not wish to break openly with their party by joining the new Progressive party.¹

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and Washington, and received eleven of the thirteen electoral votes of California, making eighty-eight votes in all. President Wilson carried all the other forty-one States and two votes in California, receiving 435 electoral votes out of a total of 531, or 169 votes more than the necessary majority. In the popular vote President Wilson was in a minority of over 2,000,000 as against the combined vote of his opponents.

¹ Senators Cummins of Iowa, Works of California, Borah of Idaho, either supported Wilson openly or by their silence in the campaign assisted in his election. Senator La Follette, who felt that he had personal reasons for opposing Roosevelt, by his continued antagonism to President Taft virtually threw his aid to Governor Wilson.

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CHAPTER X

DEMOCRATIC RESTORATION: WILSON AND THE WAR

WHEN President Wilson was inaugurated, March 4, 1913, the Democrats found themselves in power in all three branches of the Federal Government. The party had a large working majority in the House (147), and for the first time in eighteen years they had a majority in the Senate. In 1893-94, under Cleveland, the party had failed on the tariff and had been torn asunder on the money question, and for nearly twenty years thereafter the Democrats had been rent by factions. Now under Wilson's leadership the party was prepared for united action.

Mr. W. J. Bryan had been the chief agency in promoting Wilson's nomination, and Wilson recognized Bryan's importance in Democratic circles by calling him to the chief place in his cabinet. The administration began under unusual difficulties, but by 1914 the Democratic leaders could call attention to a creditable list of constructive policies: (1) to a revision of the tariff downward, by the Underwood Act, (September 29, 1913); (2) to a currency bill of first importance, the Federal Reserve Act of December 23, 1913 which was designed, as President Wilson put it, to "destroy the monopoly of money and create a democracy of credit"; (3) to the enlargement of agricultural credit by the

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encouragement of national farm loan associations; (4) to an income tax, which shifted the burden of taxation from consumers to the shoulders of richer men; (5) to the Clayton Anti-Trust Act, (October, 1914) for the regulation of Trusts and the prevention of monopolies. (6) A Federal Trade Commission was created (September 12, 1914) to have oversight of the Trusts, a non-partisan board of five members whose purpose it should be to prohibit unfair trading.

With this legislative record Wilson and his party faced the congressional election of 1914. Wilson was a distinct asset to his party. The country looked upon him as a leader of ability, of keen intelligence, earnest purpose, and high ideals. Wilson, like Roosevelt, would make the most of his office. He would bring Congress to act through the power of public opinion. His conception of the presidency was not purely legalistic, like that of Taft or of Hughes; but to Wilson, as to Roosevelt, the presidency was an opportunity for leadership, for promoting action on vital public questions, to enable a presidential leader to do for the people what the constitution did not forbid him to do, not merely to enforce such laws as a leaderless Congress might happen to pass.¹

The opposition to the Democrats was still divided, though the Progressive vote was destined to fade and

¹ "So long as he had a Democratic majority to deal with Wilson combined the functions of prime minister and president. Good or bad as we may choose to look upon it, Mr. Wilson's combination of these functions was at least productive of results upon the statue book. During his first term he obtained from Congress substantially all that he asked for. The legislative record of these years is almost without parallel in the political history of any country."—(Professor Wm. B. Munro, of Harvard, *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1923, on "Two Years of President Harding.")

disappear. On the other hand the first effect of the European war, Wilson's neutrality announcement, the falling off of imports and the special "war tax" made necessary thereby, were not favorable to the party in power. The large Democratic majority of 147 in the House was cut to 29. The Administration, however, gained two Senators, and the party reverse may be said to have been no worse than usually happens to the "ins" in an "off year."

The presidential contest of 1916 marks the reunion of the Republican party and the practical disappearance of the Progressive party in the country at large. However, many of the former Republicans who had gone off with the Progressive wing did not return to that party. Like many of the Liberal Republicans of 1872, many of these Progressives went into the Democratic party, or as independents supported President Wilson for reelection.¹ To these independent Progressives, Wilson made a strong appeal and it was the failure to induce their return to the Republican fold, notably in Kansas, California, and Washington, that made possible Wilson's reelection in 1916.

The Republicans named Charles E. Hughes, one of the Associate Justices of the United States Supreme Court, as their candidate for President in 1916. Hughes had been Governor of New York but as a member

¹ Mr. Bainbridge Colby, who afterwards became President Wilson's Secretary of State, is a case in point. Also, among such Progressives may be mentioned Colonel Parker, of Louisiana, later Governor of that State, Matthew Hale, of Massachusetts, Amos Pinchot, of Pennsylvania, Ida M. Tarbell, of New York, and William Kent and Francis J. Heney, of California. It should not be forgotten that quite a number of those who voted for Roosevelt in 1912 had come out of the Democratic party. If another candidate than Wilson had been named at Baltimore thousands more would have come out.

of the court he had been "out of politics" for the previous six years. He was acceptable to Roosevelt and it was believed that he would reconcile the Progressives and reunite the party. The "regulars" or "stand-patters," who controlled the convention did not prefer Hughes but they found it necessary to name some one whom Roosevelt would endorse. The Progressive national convention renominated Roosevelt, but he refused to accept their nomination and he urged his followers to support Hughes. This was a death blow to the Progressive party. Roosevelt deemed it important to unite all elements of the opposition to Wilson. Colonel John M. Parker, of Louisiana, the Progressive nominee for Vice-President, refused to follow this advice and he and many other Progressives turned their support to President Wilson.

Wilson and Marshall were renominated by the Democrats without opposition. The presidential primaries did not function. There was no call for their use within the Democratic party, and in the Republican party Hughes who had been "picked" for the running could not become a "candidate" before the people in the primaries since he was a member of the court.

Before his renomination in 1916 Wilson forestalled the attacks of his political opponents by appealing to the country for greater military preparedness. He had been remiss in action upon the sinking of the *Lusitania* (May 7, 1915) in which 104 Americans, including women and children had been sent to the bottom of the sea. This outrage had been denounced by Roosevelt on the day of its occurrence as an act of piracy. In one of a series of notes Wilson warned the German Government that it would be held to a "strict accountability" and that the United States would do what

might be necessary to safeguard American lives and property upon the high seas. He conducted also an open fight against the German policy fostered by leaders of both parties in Congress, of placing an embargo on the purchase and shipment of American munitions by the Allies.

Thus in the political and diplomatic conflict Wilson had kept the record clear, while at the same time those who hailed him for reelection could make use of the forcible campaign slogan, "He has kept us out of war." That struck deep in the desire of the American people. It was obvious that the German-American voters who were stoutly in favor of Germany in the war and the anti-British Irish would be thrown against Wilson and it was only late in the campaign that these alien interests were given distinctly to understand that they had not much to hope from Mr. Hughes who said that he would see to it that the nation should not be "held captive to any foreign influence or swerved by alien machinations."

ELECTION OF 1916

The election of 1916 was the closest in the Electoral College since that of 1876. The result hung on California in which State the Wilson Electors were finally found to have pluralities varying from 1200 to 3800. For the first time within fifty years a president had been elected without the electoral vote of New York.¹ Wilson was chosen by the West, and he had gained the distinction of being the first Democratic president

¹ The year 1876 may be considered exceptional, as the election was determined in that year by a special commission.

elected to succeed himself since Andrew Jackson's second election in 1832. Wilson received fully 2,000,000 more votes than were ever before cast for a Democratic candidate, which may be accounted for partly by the increased number of women who voted in the Western States. It was a Wilsonian rather than a Democratic victory, just as in 1904 the vote for Roosevelt was largely personal and because of the popularity of the Roosevelt policies.¹

While Hughes lost California and thereby lost the presidency, Hiram Johnson the Republican candidate for United States Senator in California carried the State by nearly 300,000 majority. This clearly indicated that thousands of California Progressives voted for Wilson. This was largely due to Hughes' unfortunate campaign visit to the State, when he allowed himself to be entirely guided by the reactionary wing of his party. He was not allowed to meet Governor Johnson nor to have anything to do with the Progressives of the State. If he had any Progressive leanings or convictions he seemed not to be allowed or was unwilling to express them. This the California voters resented in fear that Hughes was lined up with the reactionary forces of invisible government. So far as Hughes seemed to know California Progressives had no existence. The California incident had great weight in other sections of the country. It appeared that six years of service on the bench had made him oblivious of a decade of political progress in the West. This is sufficient to explain why Hughes lost California, Washington, Kansas, Ohio, and the election.

¹ A study of the election returns will show that very generally through the country Wilson ran much ahead of his party tickets.

WILSON, THE WAR AND THE LEAGUE

When America entered the World War (April 6, 1917) public attention became absorbed by the conflict, and but little attention was given to domestic politics. The people united for national defense in a non-partisan spirit. Never before in our history had there been such national unity in support of a war. Republican leaders pledged their support to the Democratic Administration. President Wilson expressed this non-partisan war spirit in May, 1918, when he announced that "politics is adjourned."

The election [he said], will go to those who think least of it. The people of this country are not only united in the resolute purpose to win the war but they are ready and willing to bear any burden and undergo any sacrifice that it may be necessary for them to bear in order to win it.

While this national spirit above party was prominent on the surface, the party managers were in fact closely watching one another for flaws in their "no-party" loyalty. The people had but little interest in politics and elections, and in the Congressional campaign of 1918 there was no activity until late in October. Then the "adjournment of politics" came to a sudden end by the action of President Wilson himself. Ten days before the election (October 25th) the President issued an appeal to the country requesting the voters to approve his conduct of the war by electing only Democrats to Congress. Men of all parties had loyally supported his war policies, but Mr. Wilson asked that only Democrats should be elected. He held that the election of an opposition House and Senate would be

construed as a vote of a lack of confidence in his leadership. He wanted a Congress that would be not only pro-war but pro-Wilson.

This partisan plea on the part of the President was a tactical blunder. It invited a vigorous party fight. Roosevelt, Taft, and Hughes, former party leaders and Mr. Will Hays of the National Committee took up the cudgels for the Republicans. They denounced the President for repudiating loyalty to the war as a test for a candidate and for asking the defeat of pro-war Republicans but not of anti-war Democrats. In the November elections the Republicans carried both houses of Congress. They announced that they proposed to curb the increasing powers of the President and to recover for Congress "the powers and authorities bestowed by the Constitution. Congress, not the President should give orders for the conduct of the Government."

Within a few days after the election came the Armistice in the World War. The 2,000,000 soldiers in the American encampments were rapidly discharged and preparations were made to bring the 2,000,000 troops home from Europe. Wilson surprised the country by announcing that he would attend the Peace Conference at Paris, presumably as the representative of America to sit with the Premiers of other countries. These Premiers were backed by parliamentary majorities at home; they were *responsible ministers* and therefore held power and represented their countries in a sense quite different from an American President. No one knew better than Woodrow Wilson the theory and practice of the American Government and that no responsible government, subject to the vote of the people, prevails in America in the parliamentary

sense. "In no other free country in the world today would Mr. Wilson be in office," was Mr. Roosevelt's comment on Wilson's position after the election of 1918. The country had voted a "lack of confidence" in Wilson as he himself had interpreted the election prior to the vote. But under our rigid, not to say bungling congressional system, this adverse vote, unless the President took the bold and unprecedented step of resigning on account of it, could have no effect at all for a year and a month after the election (December, 1919),—unless the President saw fit to call the new opposition Congress into extra session, and then the only effect would be a governmental deadlock.

Wilson acted as if he had power. He believed in himself and his ideals and that America would stand for them. It may be useless to speculate as to what might have been if another course had been pursued. But regret at the deplorable and tragic outcome, and at the defeat of President Wilson's plans and purposes, has led thousands of his countrymen who wished him well to believe that if he had been able a little more to efface himself; if by more becoming modesty he had remained at home and had appointed an able peace commission containing at least two outstanding Republicans like Mr. Elihu Root, Ex-President Taft, or Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, he would have gone far toward disarming his partisan opponents, and it is at least reasonable to say that the outcome of the peace making might have been entirely different. If the President's personal dislike toward Mr. Lodge, could not be overcome, some other leading and acceptable Republican Senator might have been found.¹

¹ If Wilson had possessed the resignation and humility of Lincoln he could have consented to admit the chairman of the Senate Foreign

The President's prime purpose was to promote international peace. It was a noble purpose. He would do this by a league of nations, through which the World Powers might be brought annually to "sit around the table" in conference, to adjudicate disputes and reconcile conflicting interests.

This cause Wilson put to the front at Paris. He would have no treaty that did not provide for the League. This he succeeded in writing into the Treaty of Versailles.

Before this treaty was presented to the Senate thirty-seven Republican Senators signed a "round robin" known as the "Lodge manifesto," announcing their opposition to the covenant of the League. This was, largely a partisan movement. The partisan Senators were proposing to do what they could to wreck Wilson and his treaty. It was not a Republican treaty, not *their* treaty; why should they help the opposing party leader in such a great enterprise? Wilson and Lloyd George also signed a treaty with France guaranteeing protection to France should Germany ever again make an aggressive invasion of French soil.

In American minds these were the two outstanding features of the Treaty. About reparations, mandates, territorial assignments, the American people knew little and cared less. They had a general feeling, deep seated, that Germany should pay and the Kaiser be dethroned, and that no treaty could be too severe on Germany. But the treaty raised up a host of enemies.

Affairs Committee to a part of the glory, as petty and hateful as Lodge was. Lodge's partisan meanness toward Wilson did not exceed the unbearable insolence of McClellan toward Lincoln, yet Lincoln bore patiently with McClellan, saying that he would willingly hold his stirrup if McClellan would but win a victory for the cause.

Some thought it too lenient to Germany. Germans in America opposed it because it was too harsh. The Irish opposed it because Great Britain favored it and had gained certain German colonies. The Socialists opposed it as inspired by capitalism and because it disregarded "self-determination" in mandated territories and because Shantung had been yielded to Japan. Radicals and liberals turned against it because the armistice had been violated and the "fourteen points" discarded. Isolationists declared that American independence had been betrayed and timid Americans were made to believe that under "Article 10" Americans might be compelled by the League Council to go to war over matters in which we had no concern.¹ Together with all these objections the League fell into the fatal morass of party politics and after that it never got a fair or rational hearing. Mr. Wilson was accused of refusing any change whatever in the covenant of the League because he was unwilling to accept all the Lodge reservations. He had made reasonable concessions and explanations; he had safeguarded the Monroe Doctrine and domestic policies; and if he had accepted the full Lodge reservations (concocted to defeat the League) it is not certain even then that the League would have gone through, as its partisan enemies in the Senate would likely have raised the hurdles higher or devised other means for its defeat.

Wilson appealed to the country, but his speaking tour ended abruptly in his break-down and he was brought back to Washington a sick and broken man.

The Treaty was finally and definitely defeated in the

¹ It was expressly provided in the covenant that all decisions under Article 10, must be unanimous, so America's own objection was enough to keep us out of war.

Senate on March 1, 1920, and the parties began preparations for the presidential campaign. A considerable body of opinion favored the nomination of Herbert Hoover, the master organizer of Belgian relief, and an independent in politics. General Leonard Wood and Governor Lowden, of Illinois were two other aspirants for the Republican nomination, both of whom showed strength in the presidential primaries. Mr. Harding, United States Senator from Ohio, the destined candidate, proved a poor third in the primary voting of his party. Wood and Lowden were both weakened by the use of large campaign funds in their interests.

It was obviously a Republican year and the Republican managers felt, as Senator Penrose expressed it, that "any good Republican can be nominated and can defeat any Democrat." By a good Republican, Penrose meant a "regular" of the old school, who had not been tinged with the qualities of a progressive, insurgent, bolter, or reformer. The Convention nominated that kind of a Republican.

Warren G. Harding the nominee, from a party point of view, was steady and reliable, always a party regular, one who would "stand without being hitched." In point of ability he was an average American. Personally he was easy-going, affable, peace-loving and likable, a man who was likely to attract men of all shades of opinion and alienate none.

The Republican platform denounced Wilson's League but at the same time declared for "an inter-national association based on international justice," and for an international court that would bring about international conferences when peace was threatened.

This platform, looking both ways, was designed to catch both advocates and opponents of the League.

During the campaign more than thirty eminent Republican advocates of the League addressed the country urging the voters to elect Mr. Harding as the surest means of bringing America into a League, since Mr. Harding while opposing certain features of this League had declared for "an association of nations," understood to be about the same thing under another name.¹ There was a remarkable opposition coalition which could rally opponents of the League and friends of the League; the Irish who hated England; the Germans who hated America's part in the war; the Roosevelt anti-Wilson followers; and the "old guard" organization men who sighed for the flesh pots and the offices of "the good old days of Mark Hanna's time."

The Democratic campaign was hopeless from the first. The platform placed the League of Nations at the front. The President was commended for his courage and steadfastness and the Senate was arraigned for its refusal to ratify. The Federal operation of the railroads was defended as efficient in a time of emergency, and although the President had recommended the return of the railway properties to private ownership, the claim was made that Wilson was forced to accept the Esch-Cummins act providing for this return on unfair terms or "face the chaos of a veto."

In domestic politics the Democrats were able to bring forward a creditable array of measures to show for its eight years of power. The income tax had been made a permanent part of the revenue system; certain inequities of the tariff system had been removed; pan-

¹ A newspaper wag sized up the situation by saying that on the League issue the Republicans made two all-powerful arguments in the campaign: (1) Elect Harding and keep us out of the League. (2) Elect Harding as the only chance to get us into the League.

Americanism had been encouraged; Alaska had been opened to commerce; an effective seaman's act was adopted; child labor legislation was enacted; the parcels post and rural free delivery were developed; a good roads bill and rural credits act were passed; eight hour laws were adopted; a warehouse act, a Federal employment bureau, farm loan banks, postal savings banks, the Federal Reserve System,—these and other beneficial measures were brought forward by Democratic orators in claims for popular support. They cited the achievements of the war. The multiplied agencies of war had been mobilized,—the war risk insurance, ship-building, custody of alien property, the war industries board, food and fuel regulation, the vast loans, vocational training, the council of defense, the selective draft; the landing of 2,000,000 men in France,—a long list of war achievements were forcibly cited.

But these things all counted for nothing. There were too many hostile elements in opposition; too many antagonisms had been aroused to give the Democrats a chance in the election. Railroad labor was dissatisfied with the Esch-Cummins act. Other organized labor was displeased because of the injunctive processes in strikes and labor disputes. The farmers were beginning to suffer from the depression that they anticipated from increased railroad rates and from the deflation policy of the Federal Reserve Board. There had been waste and extravagance in the war, in building ships, air craft, and cantonments. The Sinn Fein Irish were groaning over the "black and tan" campaign in Ireland and because Wilson ("The Englishman in the White House") refused to intervene. The Italians in America were stirred to revolt over Wilson's position at Paris on Fiume. The German sympathizers were unrelenting.

There was revolt against authority. The old school constitutional conservatives cried out against too much government, too much executive control, too much national power. The "wets" were holding the party in power responsible for the 18th Amendment, the Volstead Act, and the arid condition of the country. Big business and the moneyed men groaned under too much taxes, too many national boards and commissions, too much interference with business. The socialists and the members of the "Civic Rights League" disliked the Espionage Act; Debs and the political prisoners had the sympathy of many idealists and lovers of freedom, who denounced the Government's interference with personal liberty. It was easily apparent, long before the election that the forces of the opposition were overwhelming.

The League was talked about from one end of the country to the other, but it was misrepresented and misunderstood. Partisanship turned it into a fearful bogie. Its cause became personified in Wilson and identified with partisan Democratic interests. It was defeated, for the time, by a combination of personal dislike toward Wilson, of "local provincialism, American jingoism, social unrest, reaction following the war, pro-Germanism and Sein Fein hatred of England."

The Democratic candidates, Governor James M. Cox, of Ohio, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, of New York,¹ made an uphill fight for the League of Nations. But the Republican candidates, Warren G. Harding, of Ohio and Calvin Coolidge, Governor of Massachusetts, were elected by majorities without precedent in American politics. Harding carried New York State by over a million majority and the other States

¹ Assistant Secretary of the Navy and a cousin of Theodore Roosevelt.

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in the North in like proportions. He had 405 votes in the Electoral College to his opponents' 134, while his popular majority in the country at large was nearly 7,000,000.¹

The Harding majority represented a union of the discontented, a mingling of many elements, racial, political, and economic, who were united in wishing a change, but, as the sequel showed, they were without a basis of unity for a constructive policy.

¹ Wilson received more electoral votes in 1912 than Harding did in 1920, owing to the fact that the "Solid South" even in 1920 was in the main true to its Democratic allegiance.

CHAPTER XI

PRESENT DAY PARTIES AND ISSUES

POLITICAL issues undergo rapid changes. A controversy is here to-day and is gone to-morrow. All one can attempt in a chapter on current politics is to present the more significant events of the time and the more salient subjects of controversy that may have some permanent results for later years.

The Republicans under Mr. Harding came into an embarrassing inheritance. Much of the gigantic organization for war had yet to be reduced to a peace basis. War extravagance had been great and there was a mass of governmental activities that had to be suspended. The war debt had to be cared for; taxation had to be reduced; and though war expenses were being cut off, much more than pre-war revenues had to be provided. The Republicans adopted an administrative Budget System, a constructive measure backed by a demand of long standing whose final consummation was much to the party's credit.

There was lack of leadership in promoting legislation, which President Harding was indisposed or incompetent to supply. With a traditional attachment to a *pure theory* of the Constitution, he fell back, as Taft had done, to the so-called "fine balance between Executive and Legislative in the American System" and he refused to assert presidential leadership for any legislative

policy. This left Congress leaderless. For "one man government" was substituted "no man government," under which the President makes recommendation which Congress ignores.

The new Administration found acute agricultural depression, and it had, perforce, to "do something for the farmer." An emergency tariff was imposed on farm products and an agricultural credits bill was passed, but these measures were not accepted as satisfactory by representatives of the farming interests of the North-west.

Congress more leisurely built up a new complete tariff system (the Fordney-McCumber Tariff of 1922) which repealed the Democratic Underwood Tariff and reverted to high protection. This served to keep the tariff issue before the country, as the Democrats challenged the wisdom of the new legislation. The farmers still found high prices for what they had to buy and low prices for what they had to sell.

In foreign affairs the Republicans faced serious troubles:

In Central America they adopted the Wilsonian policy as seen in the Panama treaty with Colombia, by which \$25,000,000 were paid (now that Roosevelt was dead) to meet Colombia's claims or to salve Colombia's soreness. The Republican conversion to this policy, which they had so roundly condemned in Mr. Wilson, gave to the Democrats an opening, who immediately charged that the compelling motive of the new Republican policy toward Colombia was to be found in certain corporation interests in Colombian oil.

As to Mexico, the policy of "cleaning up Mexico" was dropped for Wilson's "watchful waiting." For over two years, Secretary Hughes refused to recognise the Obregon government unless and until American

mining properties and privileges in Mexico were safeguarded against Mexican tax provisions which American owners claimed would lead to confiscations. The American claim was that the Mexican tax provisions should not be retro-active, or *ex post facto*, so as to apply to holdings obtained by Americans prior to the new Mexican constitution authorizing such taxation. Secretary Hughes finally recognized Obregon and later he authorized the sale to Obregon's government of American guns and munitions to aid in the suppression of a new revolution and insurrection,—a policy that was sharply criticized as undue intervention in the domestic affairs of another State, which aroused the fear and suspicion of Latin American countries and presaged trouble in the future.

As to Europe, President Harding dropped his substitute "association of nations" and interpreted his election as a mandate against our having anything to do with the League of Nations. We should work out our own destinies in our own way, which appeared like a policy of isolation. The Republican President and Senate having rejected the Versailles treaty of the Allied and associated nations, made a separate treaty with Germany and they arranged terms for the settlement (within 62 years) of the British debt to America. Three days before the 67th Congress expired President Harding in a message to the Senate recommended that America should officially recognize and be represented on the International Court of Justice on condition that we should not be understood to be giving any recognition of the League of Nations, though the Court was the creature and outcome of the League. President Coolidge in his annual message in December, 1923, renewed this recommendation. This was a formal

acquiescence in the Court to satisfy the public demand for it, though there was no very hearty presidential support for the cause on the part of either Harding or Coolidge.

There was disappointment in America over the results, or lack of results, of the World War. A large body of voters, of both parties, still stood for the League of Nations. They were for coöperation with the rest of the world, not isolation, and they began to press the Administration toward international action that would bring America into some worthy place of service or leadership among the nations. These advocates of peace began to complain because, as they charged, two years of the Harding Administration had been allowed to go by without any indication of a foreign policy toward the tangled affairs of Europe.

The domestic situation was no better. Added to the agricultural depression there were two great labor troubles, namely, a strike of the United Miners and of the railway shopmen. The Harding Administration pursued a do-less, wavering, and uncertain policy. The miner's strike was allowed to run on until winter and calamity threatened, with the fuel supply of the nation most seriously depleted. In the railway strike, Mr. Daugherty, the Attorney General, finally took part in favor of the railroads, by securing from a Federal judge a blanket injunction against the shopmen, forbidding all kinds of speech and activity in support of the strike. This incensed organized labor in all trades and crafts and added to the spirit of radicalism and discontent. It was within this week that Senator La Follette carried the Republican primaries in Wisconsin by over 220,000 majority (Sept., 1922).

The Congressional elections of 1922 showed a marked spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction in the country. The Republicans suffered sensational losses in the Senate, their majority in the upper house being reduced from 24 to 10, while their unwieldy majority of 167 in the House was reduced to 16.

The result of the election could be interpreted in no other light than as a severe rebuke to the Harding administration. The tremendous majorities for the Republicans of 1920 were entirely wiped out. The political pendulum was swinging back vigorously, as Congress and the country lurched heavily to the left. The Democrats carried New York by nearly 400,000 majority. Ex-Governor Edwards of New Jersey (a pronounced "wet" who had said that he would like to see New Jersey "as wet as the Atlantic Ocean") defeated Senator Frelinghuysen, President Harding's close friend, for the Senate.¹

It was strikingly noticeable that the Republican candidates for Senate and House were usually defeated in those States where these candidates were the more closely identified with the Harding policies and the conservative wing of the party, while in those States where the Republican candidates were running on a radical or progressive platform these candidates were successful. Representative Fess, a friend of the President and an organization Republican, was successful in his race for the Senate in Ohio largely because he was more satisfactory to the "drys" (who carried Ohio on a wet and dry referendum by over 180,000 majority), and also because his Democratic opponent, Senator

¹ These results in New York and New Jersey were attributed by the wets to popular dissatisfaction with the prohibition laws, but it is clear that the dissatisfied voters had other things, too, in mind.

Pomerene, had seriously antagonized union labor by his attitude on railway legislation.

Albert J. Beveridge, candidate for U. S. Senator in Indiana was defeated largely because he defended the Harding Administration and promised to uphold it. This did not placate the "regulars" whose candidate (Senator New) Beveridge had defeated in the Spring primaries. Beveridge appealed still further for conservative support. He opposed the surtax on excess profits, which is a tax on the richer classes; he advocated the sales tax, which is a tax on all buying and selling of the masses; he denounced the Adamson act, 8-hour day at 10 hours pay for railroad labor, but which the Republican majority in Congress had made not the slightest effort to repeal; and he denounced the "bloc system" in legislation, which had been applied for the first time in favor of millions of toiling farmers. Beveridge thus offended progressives, railway unions, and organized farmers. The "bloc" in Congress, as the farmers felt, was not new. It was now "in the open" working for a different interest; but there had been "blocs" in Congress for specially favored classes all these years,—a bankers' bloc, a manufacturers' bloc, an oil bloc, a sugar bloc, a steel bloc, etc. It was only when farmers began to unite their forces and solidify their power to promote their own interests that the "bloc system" was denounced by old party leaders as dangerous and odious.

The result of the fall elections in 1922 was to re-enforce strongly the radical farm bloc in the Senate.

Radical There were added to this group Frazier from
Movements North Dakota (a Non-Partisan elected on
in the West the Republican ticket), Shipstead, candidate of the Farmer-Labor party from Minnesota,

Wheeler, Progressive Democrat from Montana; Howell, Progressive Republican from Nebraska, and Brookhart, an outspoken radical Republican from Iowa. Hiram Johnson, of California was reelected by a decisive but reduced majority, while La Follette was returned by an overwhelming vote from Wisconsin.¹ In July, 1923 Magnus Johnson, candidate for the Senate of the Farmer-Labor party in Minnesota, at a special election on account of the death of Senator Nelson, was elected by a majority of over 90,000 against the regular Republican candidate, Governor Preuss, who had beaten Johnson for the Governorship by a small majority in 1920. Johnson's election was taken to show that the radical tide in the Northwest had not subsided. In the East Henry Cabot Lodge the Republican conservative leader in the Senate barely escaped defeat in Massachusetts in 1922 winning only by the lean plurality of about 7,000 votes.

The causes of complaint among the farmers of the Northwest and the political proposals of the new Farmer-Labor party and other liberal elements likely to merge with them, may be briefly summarized as follows:

1. On Transportation.

They wish better facilities and cheaper rates for transporting their products to market. They, therefore, demand the repeal of the Esch-Cummins Transportation Act of 1920, or the parts of it touching rates and the guarantee of six per cent on railway investments. The farmers had been led to believe that the Government was "guaranteeing dividends on watered securities of Wall Street bankers." The farmers were told that the roads were capitalized for nearly

¹ About 280,000 majority.

twenty billions while their actual cost was not over twelve billions. The food the farmers were raising was rotting on the ground and going to waste while thousands in our large cities were suffering for the necessities of life. Freight rates, commission merchants, and middle men were eating up the profits and the farmers' products would not bring the cost of production.¹

2. On credit and money.

There was inflation during the war. There was an increasing supply of money, a liberal extension of credit, large issues of Federal Reserve notes, (1917-1919). There was plenty of money to lend; borrowing was easy; the people were encouraged to extend their credit. Then came rapid deflation, (1920-1922). Loans were called on short notice. Credit was shut off. The Regional banks in the Federal Reserve System refused to discount the commercial paper of the country banks, and these banks, unable to get money on their assets, had to refuse loans or could not renew their notes to the farmers. One of the worst depressions in our history occurred. This was done at a time when the Federal Reserve System in New York according to the Wall Street Journal, had a credit extension of twenty billions. The farmers had been "deflated" disastrously. They held the process to be unnecessary, at any rate too rapid, and it was their prices chiefly that had fallen while the prices of what they had to buy were still maintained almost at war levels. They demanded

¹ In Minnesota thousands of acres of potatoes were left in the field to rot. A Dakota farmer shipped a carload of potatoes to Minneapolis which sold for \$243.00. After the freight rates and all middlemen's charges were paid the farmer received \$1.30 for all his seed, labor, planting, cultivating, digging, bagging and shipping the spuds!

the control of credit and money in the interest of the people, that is, of debtors and producers, and they directed their attacks at the Federal Reserve Board, demanding the appointment of a "dirt farmer" on that body.¹

Following the election of 1922 the radical and progressive groups held various conferences and set forth their plans and purposes:

I. More democratic political machinery,—the abolition of national conventions for the nomination of presidential candidates and, consequently the retention and extension of the direct primary, the abolition of the Electoral College, and direct voting for President and Vice-President; an amendment to the Constitution (The Norris amendment) doing away with the long period of time between a Congressional election, and the regular meeting of Congress, providing that the new Congress shall meet on the first Monday in January following the election in November, the President to be inaugurated on the third Monday in January instead of the 4th of March.

The radical bloc has also an economic program. It favors a revision of the tariff downward, the restoration of excess profits taxes, a reduction of freight rates. It desires to destroy "special privilege" and to that end it will try to bring about a larger public control of natural resources. It will seek legislation touching agriculture, labor, railroads, shipping, taxation, and rural credits. The radical group will try to bring the Government under the control of the producers of the country, on the farm, in the field, factory, mine or workshop. The more radical members of the group

¹ On this subject see an article by Mark Sullivan in the *Saturday Evening Post* for November 10, 1922.

stand for public ownership of transportation systems, the public control of natural resources in harmony with the platform of the "Committee of 48."¹

While many of the progressive, or radical, group will maintain their connections with their old parties, "boring from within" in their effort to control their party policies and platforms, yet a very numerous bloc of voters are coöperating to make certain a new "third party" in 1924. The nucleus for this is the Farmer-Labor party of the Northwest. The Farmer-Labor party has already elected two United States Senators from Minnesota. A national convention was called to meet in Minneapolis on June 17, 1924, to nominate independent candidates for President and Vice-President. An effort was made to consolidate all third party groups and make a strong bid for the support of the progressive voters who are still in the old parties. The party holds first place in Minnesota and is already strong in the Dakotas, in Idaho and Washington, in Montana, Nebraska and Oklahoma, with substantial followings in Colorado, Texas and Kansas. It is running a close second in some of these States and a strong third in others. The plan is to nationalize this party by combining farmers and industrial wage earners on the basis of economic interests. In Minnesota this union has been brought about between the farmers' leagues and the railroad laborers leading an organized labor movement 100,000 strong, which accounts for the success of the Farmer-Labor bloc in that State. Economic depression has been partly the cause of this movement, but it has also been

¹ The committee of 48 has its headquarters at 15 East 40th Street. Its organ is "The Liberal," its chairman, J. A. H. Hopkins. See the proposed Farmer-Labor platform on pages 227, 267 and 271.

largely promoted by old party perfidy and chicanery. Organization and education in the new movement has gone on steadily for several years, and with reactionary failure and disappointment coming out of Washington the strength of the movement may grow into large proportions throughout the country.

A Farmer-Labor Progressive platform has been offered in conference for consideration. The spokesmen for this movement announce:

Our purpose is the abolition of privilege, meaning by privilege the unjust economic advantage by possession of which a small group controls our natural resources, transportation, industry and credit, stifles competition, prevents opportunity of development for all, and thus dictates the conditions under which we live.

To accomplish this we advocate:

Public control of natural resources by taxation of all land values, including land containing coal, oil, natural gas, mineral deposits, large water powers, and large commercial timber tracts, in order to prevent monopoly and speculation, to aid industry, and to force idle lands into use.

Public ownership of railroads, canals and pipe lines, including all necessary distributing and terminal facilities and all necessary means of communication, in order to give the same service to all users.

Equal rights, economic, legal and political, for all citizens, and all Civil Rights, including Free Speech, Free Press, and Peaceable Assembly, as guaranteed by the Constitution.

Government banking, by which the Government of the United States shall enter the banking system, reserving to itself the sole right to issue currency and to determine the amount of currency which may be issued to the American people; and shall establish banks in sufficient number to meet the needs and suit the conveniences of our people, through which borrowing facilities, subject to stated condi

tions as to security, with reasonable limitations as to amount and at rates of interest fixed by Congress, shall be available to all citizens requiring legitimate capital for productive enterprise.

Legislation to prevent judicial abuses.

President Harding died in San Francisco while returning from a Presidential trip to Alaska in the summer of 1923. Vice-President Coolidge succeeded to the presidency. Before he became Vice-President, Coolidge had been Mayor of Northampton, State Senator, President of the State Senate, Lieutenant-Governor, and Governor of Massachusetts. While Governor he had figured in connection with a policemen's strike in Boston from which he received much credit for bringing to book the disloyal guardians of the peace. Coolidge thus won his way to the nation's imagination as a stout and fearless defender of law and order, though it is claimed that the true history of the strike will show that the Governor's display of courage was *ex post facto*, and that order had been restored before he had ventured to act. Coolidge was noted for "caution, carefulness, thoroughness, and silence." During the first few months of his presidency he made a good impression upon the country. In his annual message (December, 1923) he expressed himself as favoring the World Court, though he did nothing to bring about its acceptance by the Senate. He opposed the Soldiers' Bonus (adjusted compensation), because it would interfere with the policy which he had most at heart, namely, the reduction of national taxation. He urged upon Congress the "Mellon plan" of tax reduction, which proposed heavy cuts on the larger incomes, for the sake of business.

President Coolidge, however, was not able to bring

Congress to act favorably on his proposals. The "insurgent" Republicans forced from the "regulars" a compromise taxing plan, and the House passed a Bonus bill by an overwhelming vote over the President's veto. The action of the Republicans in Congress in refusing to follow the President's lead showed that the Republican party was divided and disorganized, and Senator La Follette let it be understood that he was willing to lead a third party in case President Coolidge were nominated for reelection by the Republicans on a conservative platform. What was to be considered "conservative" Mr. La Follette would judge for himself.

The Coolidge Administration was further embarrassed by the disgraceful oil scandals and by revelations of graft and corruption in the Veterans' Bureau, wherein millions of dollars designed for the aid of disabled veterans of the World War had been wasted or corruptly used by officials charged with a sacred trust. By the Senate's investigation of the "Tea Pot Dome" oil leases (an investigation that was first urged by Senator La Follette at the time the leases were made) it was shown that the Secretary of the Interior (A. B. Fall who had recently resigned) had basely used the powers of his office to turn valuable public oil lands over to private individuals,—oil magnates who had richly rewarded the corrupt official for the betrayal of his trust. Fall had received \$100,000, or more for the favors he had bestowed upon the oil kings. Secretary Denby, of the Navy Department was forced to resign because he had stood by consenting to a policy on the naval oil reserves which was deemed inimical to the public interest. The Attorney General's office was utterly discredited and special Government attorneys

had to be employed to safeguard the interest of the nation and to bring suit to annul the leases Fall had made of "Tea Pot Dome" and other oil fields. Attorney General Daugherty brazenly refused to resign, although he had been given to understand by Republican leaders in the Senate, if not by President Coolidge, that his presence in the Cabinet was embarrassing the Administration.

Finally the President was compelled by public opinion to request the resignation of his Attorney General, which he did on the technical ground (accompanied with compliments and expressions of personal regard) that Daugherty had refused information to the Senate Committee seeking to investigate the conduct of his office, and that, therefore, he could not be an impartial and disinterested official while such investigations were proceeding. The Administration was further disparaged because, although the oil scandals had not touched President Coolidge directly, it was shown that he had been on intimate personal terms with some of the corruptionists.

No serious opposition arose to Coolidge's renomination by the Republicans.¹ Although Coolidge seemed to have little influence with Congress and appeared as a "leader" whom his party chieftains in Congress refused to follow, yet his party managers and the Senatorial guardians of the Presidency proceeded to nominate him for reelection in the Republican National Convention meeting in Cleveland, June 12-14, 1924. In this convention the Senatorial chieftains, like Lodge, Watson, Moses, and others, were ignored or rebuffed, and the new Coolidge organization under the direction

¹ Senator Johnson, of California, tried out the primaries for a while but could make no headway.

of Mr. William M. Butler, of Massachusetts, conducted one of the smoothest conventions in the history of the party. A conventional and conservative platform, largely ignoring the corruption of their party officials, was adopted. There was no discussion on the floor of the convention and not a ripple of opposition appeared save from the Wisconsin delegation, which has been in the habit for years past of offering La Follette progressive planks in Republican national conventions only to have them booed and rejected with scorn, as happened again in 1924. Representative Cooper, of Wisconsin, however, reminded his fellow delegates that many of these proposals of the past had since been enacted into law. Mr. Charles G. Dawes, of Illinois, was named for Vice President with President Coolidge, after ex-Governor Lowden of that State had refused the nomination which the convention had offered to him.¹

The Democratic Convention in New York, June 24 to July 9, was different. It was stormy and full of strife, the most remarkable convention in Democratic annals since 1860, when a party split resulted in two conventions and two presidential candidates. In the convention of 1924 the delegates faced equally violent and bitter differences of opinion which seemed to threaten the disruption of the party. The differences were not settled in the committees but were carried to the floor of the convention. Feeling was especially intense and passionate over a racial and religious issue which had been injected into American politics by a secret, masked, and hooded order known as the *Ku*

¹ For the refusal of such a nomination historical precedent goes back to 1844 when Gov. Wright, of New York, refused to run on the Democratic ticket with Polk.

Klux Klan. The convention witnessed a "dog fall" in the effort to denounce the *Klan* by name, the majority report of the Committee on Resolutions (which failed to denounce the *Klan*) being sustained only by the narrow margin of four votes out of a total of 1098. But for shrewd political management and the application of the unit rule, the more distinctly anti-klan expression would have been substituted.

The Democratic convention also rejected a declaration in favor of the League of Nations and proposed a popular referendum on the subject, despite the fervent and eloquent plea of Mr. Newton D. Baker, President Wilson's former Secretary of War. On the whole the platform was a compromise between the conflicting elements of the party, containing a number of progressive platitudes but without specifications as to measures and policies.

The conservatives won the nomination for President after a long and tiresome deadlock. The forces backing Gov. Smith, of New York, on the one hand, and those favoring William G. McAdoo, on the other, were locked in what seemed an uncompromising and deadly strife which threatened the unity of the party. The eastern forces backing Smith were there largely for the purpose of preventing McAdoo's nomination, hardly hoping that their own candidate could succeed. There was a field of minor candidates, or "dark horses." A decisive "break" to one of these could not come until there was assurance that neither McAdoo nor Smith could be nominated. It was by no means merely a personal fight, nor a struggle to satisfy personal ambitions. Amid the swirling elements in the convention were forces representing conflicting policies, opinions, and

measures. There was the difference between Klan and anti-Klan; between the wet and the dry; between conservative and progressive; between eastern "big business" and western and southern agrarian demands and hostility to Wall Street; between the bosses and machine organization against the more popular control of the party by the rank and file as expressed by the primaries,—all these factors entered into the struggle.

The struggle kept the convention in session for a whole week longer than has been customary in these national gatherings. The delegates were wearied by the endless balloting and many left for their homes before the contest was ended. The outcome of the struggle, on the 103rd ballot, was the nomination for President of Mr. John W. Davis, of West Virginia and New York, followed by the nomination for Vice President of Charles W. Bryan, Governor of Nebraska, and the brother of Mr. William J. Bryan. The Vice Presidential nomination was refused by Senator Walsh of Montana, who had acted as chairman of the convention; and also by Mr. Edwin T. Meredith, of Iowa (Secretary of Agriculture under President Wilson), on the ground that the nomination of Mr. Davis was too conservative to attract the dissatisfied agricultural elements of the West. Mr. W. J. Bryan, a delegate in the convention from Florida, had vigorously opposed the nomination of Davis because of Davis' reactionary record, and because he was an attorney of the Morgan financial syndicate and was therefore allied with the "capitalistic interests" whose centre was in Wall Street. Bryan contended that Davis could not detach the support of the "interests" from the Republicans and that he could not gather in any compensating electoral votes from the West.

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The conference of party managers which agreed upon the nomination of Bryan's brother for Vice-President, evidently had in mind the need of placating what has been known for twenty-five years as the "Bryan element" in the Democratic party. It was a manoeuvre and a play of politics to hold together antagonistic elements of the party, or to hold the liberals and radicals from going off after the more positive progressive movement represented by La Follette and Wheeler.¹

At a convention in Cleveland, on July 4 and 5, La Follette was nominated for President and he gave his consent to become an independent candidate. This convention was called a "Conference for Progressive Political Action," and it was composed of over 1000 delegates representing farmers' organizations, labor unions (especially the big Railway Unions), Socialists, the Committee of 48, the Non-Partisan League, the Farmer-Labor party of Minnesota and of the Northwest, the "Farmer-Labor" party of 1920 represented by the candidacy of Parley P. Christensen (see pp. 266-267) and other elements dissatisfied with the conduct of the old parties. These "Farmer-Labor" parties are confusing in number and those just named should not be identified with the so-called "Farmer-Labor" party which met in convention in Minneapolis on June 18-19, 1924. This party and its convention was openly repudiated by La Follette, as controlled, or vitiated by the presence of Communists led by Foster and Ruthenberg, who are openly in sympathy with the Russian *Internationale*.

¹ Bryan, so powerful in former conventions, was heckled, and booed and howled down in the convention while attempting to speak in opposition to Davis and in favor of McAdoo.

William Z. Foster, the leader of the *Communist Workers Party* in America (the extreme left of the radical forces), denounced La Follette's letter signifying his willingness to become an Independent candidate for President, as the "most reactionary document of the year," and Foster and his Communist colleagues were kept out of the Cleveland Conference. La Follette asserted that he would represent no class movement, nor head any "class conscious" party; he wished no dictatorship either of the capitalist interest nor of the proletariat.

It was not apparent, however, that the communists of the Workers' party controlled the Farmer-Labor convention at Minneapolis, though they were members of that gathering. The Minneapolis convention nominated for President Duncan McMillan, a former president of the Illinois Federation of Miners, and for Vice President, Mr. Bouck, a farmer of Washington State; but it was understood that these were provisional nominations which might be withdrawn by the national committee in favor of La Follette if he should consent to stand as a candidate. It is understood that this policy is in way of adoption.

The Socialists in their regular national convention (July 8, 1924) formally endorsed La Follette's candidacy and they put no ticket of their own in the field, —for the first time since 1888. This action is looked upon by some as "the passing of the Socialist party"; but this course was advised by the old stalwarts among Socialists, Eugene V. Debs, Victor Berger, and Morris Hillquit. This action marks the triumph of the "right wing" of the Socialist forces and it may indicate that their leaders are hereafter intending to stress practical politics rather than Marxian theories and are willing

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to coöperate with others in organizing in America a Labor Party somewhat like the Labor Party in England, designed to represent certain economic groups in America which have cause to be dissatisfied with the present distribution of political and economic power.

The Conference for Progressive Political Action did not form a "third party," since La Follette and his followers did not wish to do anything to prevent the election in several of the States of candidates who are running on Republican and Democratic tickets. The purpose is to rally as large a protest vote as possible around an independent candidate and to strengthen the progressive bloc in Congress. The formation of the new party will follow, if the voting forces arrayed in protest under the La Follette banner are able to cause sufficient disintegration in the old parties.

The La Follette principles are partly indicated elsewhere in this volume.¹ The new platform further demands the direct public control of the nation's money "with credit on fair terms to all"; public ownership of railroads "with democratic operation," suggestive of the Plumb Plan; the abolition of injunctions in labor disputes and of the power of judges to punish for contempt without trial by jury; the "abolition of the tyranny and the usurpation of the courts including the practice of nullifying legislation that may be out of harmony with the political and economic theories of the judges"; and prompt ratification of the pending child labor amendment, and a Federal law to protect children in industry. In addition to these things the La Follette convention, in harmony with the rising tide of

¹ See pp. 223-227.

public opinion against war and the preparation for war, expressed a sharp protest to the War Department against the national military mobilization now being planned by the Department, and another plank in the platform indicates that the La Follette campaign against the old parties will involve a vigorous attack on the imperialist and militarist policies that promote war. "We denounce," says the platform, "the mercenary system of a foreign policy in the interest of financial imperialists, oil monopoly, and international bankers, which has at times degraded our State Department from high and friendly service toward defenceless Governments, fostering, instead, outposts for those interests and concession-seekers engaged in the exploitation of weaker nations." They favored the revision of the Versailles treaty, to bring it into harmony with the terms of the armistice, and "the promotion of treaty agreements with all nations to outlaw war, to abolish conscription, and to reduce drastically land, air, and naval armaments, and to guarantee public referendum on war."

Thus, with La Follette's entrance into the field, backed by numerous organized blocs; with party ties resting lightly on the voters; with the Ku Klux Klan, in its masked and underground operations, threatening the American electorate with divisions on religious lines and the consequent possible formation of a Catholic bloc; with numerous inter-party divisions on prohibition, the World Court, the League of Nations, and world peace, the American people, as they enter the campaign of 1924, are facing a political situation of unusual complications.

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REFERENCES ON RECENT AMERICAN POLITICAL HISTORY

Among many recent books on American politics and of personal reminiscences the student may find interest and profit in the following, which may not have been previously cited in the footnotes or at chapter endings:

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Note the party campaign Text Books, the Proceedings of the National
Conventions, and the periodical literature of the times.

CHAPTER XII

MINOR PARTIES

THE American voters have very generally accepted the idea that under our system of government there can be but two parties,—that a third party tends to break up the solidarity of the state and leads to impotency and confusion. But for this idea and habit, the conditions were favorable in 1896 and 1900 for the formation of another party with a purpose more permanent than merely to secure the defeat of one of the parties in a single campaign. This might have been composed of the Gold Democrats and others who were displeased with Mr. Bryan and free silver and too many government enterprises, and of disaffected Republicans and independents who were opposed to continued high protection and the foreign policy of the Republican party and who professed to vote the Republican ticket because they had no other which they could consistently support. The result was a large body of malcontents. To a large element the situation presented a choice between two evils. The tendency to avoid the organization of a third party leads to an attempt among politicians to harmonize elements that are essentially out of harmony, that have no vital unity of principle and purpose. The

result is sharp practice, evasive platforms, the suppression of men's honest convictions "for the sake of the party," and the final deception and disappointment of one wing or the other of the party forces.¹ It is in such a period of transition as from 1892 to 1900, when parties seek to adjust themselves to new conditions and new issues, that third parties increase their supporters, and a large element of discontent exists within the old parties. Such has been the dominant characteristic of the party situation within the last two decades.

Americans have generally accepted the two-party system. It is difficult to induce voters to leave their parties to vote with a "third party." The hope of such a party's coming into power seems very remote, as none has done so since the rise of the Republican party nearly seventy years ago. With the growth of the country in area and population the task of organizing and maintaining a new party throughout the nation, and the stupendous labor and expense of inducing the majority of the voters to come to its support, seem to most citizens hopeless and unavailing. No matter how disgusted men may be with their party, they will vote with it, or vote with the opposition to rebuke their party, choosing, for the time being, as they express it, "the less of two evils." Though there may be thousands of these disgusted voters of the same way of thinking, they cannot be induced to "throw away their votes" on a third party, nor do they feel that they can afford to organize a new party that would really represent them. This is often true of strong party men who remain "very still," sulking in their tents during the campaign, and absent

The
Bi-Party
System

¹ See an article in the *Forum* for August, 1901, on "The Failure of the Two-Party System," by Albert Watkins.

themselves from the polls, or who vote with the opposite party as a means of defeating the dominant leader and faction in their own.¹ However, such party men often organize a third-party movement for temporary purposes. The two-party habit is also characteristic of most of the independent voters on whom party ties rest lightly.²

This two-party system is supposed to be in harmony with the party custom in Great Britain, and different from the party life of Continental Europe, where in each country, there are always several parties. The idea that in England third parties do not exist is a mistaken one, for in the more than two hundred years of party history since the Revolution of 1688, English history has been strewn with third parties, or with the "off-shoots" and "wings" of the old parties. Perhaps a majority of the most important ministerial measures of the nineteenth century were carried and opposed by some kind of combination or coalition of varying party elements. The "Old Tories" and the "Peelites," in 1830, the "Adullamites" and the "Radical Liberals" of 1866, the "Irish Nationalists" and "Liberal-Unionists" and the Labor party which has been a constant and influential factor in English politics for a number of recent years will serve to illustrate the lack of unity in English party life. Great Britain's part in the World War was conducted by a coalition of parties

¹ Senator D. B. Hill, of New York, in a State convention uttered the famous slogan, "I am a Democrat." In 1896 he refused to support the nominee of his party, but he said to a friend, who inquired, that he was "a Democrat still,—very still."

² The recent rapid rise and large proportions of the Progressive party may be taken as an exception to these general statements and may be attributed to unusual conditions.

and now the Labor Party is first in the House of Commons.

In America third parties have played a very important part. They have had their abuses, as they have at times been used by designing men as a means of faction or of corrupt bargain and fusion. But they have also had their distinct and important uses. They have generally been composed of men of earnest convictions and zealous purposes, and they have exercised a very considerable influence on party history, sometimes modifying or restraining the course of one of the old parties and sometimes, as our sketch of parties has shown, even turning the course of party history. When they are organized and directed by patriotic men, who care little for the causes at issue between the old parties, a third party may become a very good means of agitation and education, as well as a means of enabling a considerable body of political opinion to find rational expression at the ballot-box. The idea that men must vote with one of two parties is very illogical and leads, at times, to absurd political inconsistencies.¹ It leads citizens to vote for men whom they do not trust, and to subscribe to principles in which they do not believe. It is often an obstacle to healthy political

¹ Conditions have existed in American politics when but little reason can be given for the attempt to "reorganize" and "harmonize" in one party men of radically different characters and purposes,—except from the standpoint of the party politicians who want to carry elections and elect a President merely "to have and to hold" the offices and to dispense patronage. Radicalism and Conservatism pull apart; they cannot be yoked together. The conservative National Democratic party of 1896 should have continued to stand for its principles, as the Populists did, and it would not have been looked upon as a mere factious and temporary scheme of politicians to hoodwink some of the rank and file of the regular Democrats, or to punish the majority leaders as a means of subsequently controlling the party. See the article, "Failure of the Two-Party System," by Albert Watkins, *Forum*, August, 1901.

education and development. It tends to induce men to subordinate their real convictions for the mere idle purpose of rallying under a traditional party name to carry an election. Rational politics requires that men should stand and vote together for what they think is paramount. Men will reasonably subordinate some of their political desires for the sake of securing others, which they deem of greater importance, or for the sake of preventing the country from pursuing what may be considered a dangerous course. But to go with a party which the voter thinks is fundamentally wrong or is headed entirely in the wrong direction, merely because the other party is worse, is not calculated to make for wholesome politics or for the ultimate benefit of the country. Third parties do a great service in enabling voters to stand up for their opinions.

So third parties exist for those who wish to educate, to call attention to a cause, to cast a vote of protest against the situation. These voters realize that to up-build a new party strong enough to win is a very discouraging task, but they feel that getting into power is not the whole of party success, since a minor party may have weight enough to swing one of the major parties in the right direction. The control of the offices, the spoils of victory or the hope thereof, are, indeed, powerful factors in the continuance of an old party. But political, economic, and social conditions change rapidly. One set of conditions may produce a new party, another may dispel it. It is commonly observed that at no time since the Civil War has the public been so dissatisfied with the major parties as within these recent years (1918-1924). While it is true that the people may be heartily tired of the old parties, yet it is also true that they are not all tired for the same

reason. Some want one reform, some another. If they could all agree on the issues to be pressed a third party might easily succeed and come into power. But the dissatisfied voters are disposed to turn, not to a new party, but from one old party to the other, punishing their party for its shortcomings by "turning it out" without expecting any real reform or relief from the party turned in. It is choosing between tweedledee and tweedledum and the election goes by disgust.

Our sketch of parties has treated of those minor parties whose influence has been most pronounced in determining the course of party history. A few others of temporary interest and influence may be briefly described.

The *Quids* were the first third party in our national history. They arose under Jefferson's Administration, 1804-1808, and were led by John Randolph of Roanoke. Randolph and the Quids became The Quids dissatisfied with Jefferson's administration on two accounts. It had violated true Republican principles (which required strict adherence to States' rights) in going too far toward the promotion of national power, as in the acquisition of Louisiana and in the government of that Territory and in its embargo and commercial policies. In the second place, Randolph was displeased with Jefferson's policy toward West Florida. Jefferson publicly asserted our rightful claim to that territory, and intimated that force would be employed against Spain to maintain our rights, while privately he was applying to Congress for money with which to induce France to put such pressure on Spain as would induce the latter country to concede our claim. Randolph denounced this policy as deceitful chicanery, and he refused to support the Administration. He sought to elect Monroe over Madison in 1808, holding

that the Administration had gone far toward Roman imperialism and corruption. His faction became a *tertium quid*, belonging neither to the Administration nor to the opposition forces. They had, of course, no organization nor machinery such as we recognize in parties to-day.

The *Blue-Light Federalists* was the name applied to the Federalist opponents of the War of 1812. In 1813

The Blue-Light Federalists Commodore Decatur claimed that he was prevented, on certain dark nights, from getting to sea with his frigates from the blockaded port of New London, by blue-light signals, set to warn the British. The Federalists opposed to the war were charged with giving these signals, and all opponents of the war in New England were called "Blue-Light Federalists."

The *Anti-Masonic* party was before the public in the years from 1828 to 1832. It grew out of opposition to

The Anti-Masonic Party the Masonic fraternity, which was accused of responsibility for the murder of William Morgan in 1826. Morgan had prepared a book revealing the secrets of Free Masonry, and for this violation of his oath he was kidnapped, and it is supposed that he was drowned in the Niagara River. The Masons were accused of systematically thwarting all investigation, of placing their secret obligations above the obligations of citizenship, and thus shielding the kidnappers from prosecution and baffling justice. Great excitement and indignation were aroused against the Masons, and in western New York, the scene of the Morgan abduction, this sentiment was represented in a State political party, which polled 33,000 votes for Governor in 1828. The Anti-Masonic party increased this vote in New York in 1829 to

70,000, and in 1830 to 128,000, displacing in that State the National Republican party. William H. Seward, Millard Fillmore, Thaddeus Stevens, and Thurlow Weed, afterwards distinguished Whig leaders, first entered politics as young men in New York in the ranks of the Anti-Masons. The agitation spread to the neighboring States, and the Anti-Masons organized as a national party as one wing of the opposition to President Jackson's Administration. In Pennsylvania and Vermont it was the controlling anti-Democratic organization. Their first National Convention, which was the first National Convention of any party, was held at Philadelphia in September, 1830. Ten states were represented by ninety-six delegates. It was voted to hold a second National Convention at Baltimore in September, 1831, to be composed of as many delegates from each State as there were representatives in both Houses of Congress. These delegates were to be chosen by those who were opposed to secret societies, and were to meet for the purpose of nominating candidates for President and Vice-President. With this party, therefore, originated the party convention system of the present day. Their Convention in 1831 nominated William Wirt of Maryland for President and Amos Ellmaker of New York for Vice-President. In the election of 1832 these candidates carried only the electoral vote of Vermont. The Anti-Masons were afterwards absorbed by the Whigs, except in Pennsylvania, where they retained their separate identity for some years, electing a Governor in 1835. Within the Whig party the Anti-Masons were strong enough to secure the nomination of Harrison as against Clay in 1836 and 1840. The party has the "unique distinction of being the only party in American political

history not based on some theory of constitutional construction or on some governmental policy."¹

The *Loco-Focos* were a radical faction of the Democratic party in New York State in 1835-1837. Under

The Loco-Focos Federalist control in that State the method of issuing bank charters and controlling banks

was charged by the opposition with favoritism and corruption. After the removal of the United States deposits from the Second United States Bank and Jackson's veto of the Bank Bill the number of State banks greatly increased and the exemptions and special privileges of their charters became quite a scandal. An "Equal Rights" party was formed, within the regular Democratic party, opposed to granting special privileges. At a meeting in Tammany Hall, October 29, 1835, the regular Tammany Democrats tried to gain control. They were outnumbered; but they proposed to win their point by a *coup d'état*. Their chairman left his seat, and the lights were extinguished with the purpose of breaking up the meeting. But the "Equal Rights" men produced candles and *loco-foco* matches and continued the meeting. The next day the *Courier and Enquirer* dubbed the Equal Rights men *Loco-Focos*. The name clung to them and came to be applied to the whole National Democratic party by their opponents, as this wing became dominant in the party. It was they who announced the platform of 1836 in New York which was generally accepted by the party.² The lucifer match was then comparatively new. The word *loco-foco* was ignorantly made after the model of the word "locomotive," which had

¹ McMaster, vol. v., pp. 114-120; Stanwood, pp. 155-157; Lalor's *Cyc. Pol. Sci.*

² See p. 52.

then recently come into use. "Locomotive" was supposed to mean self-moving and "loco-foco" was supposed to mean self-lighting.¹

The *North Americans* were those who seceded from the American Convention that nominated Fillmore in 1856. They were *Anti-Nebraska* men who had been associated with the Know-Nothing, or American, party. They were resolved that the American party should nominate for President and Vice-President only such men as were in favor of congressional prohibition of slavery north of 36° 30'. Upon the failure of the party so to declare, the delegates representing constituencies of this way of thinking withdrew from the Convention. They afterwards nominated Frémont, the Republican candidate, though they rejected Dayton, Frémont's running mate, taking up Johnston of Pennsylvania instead. As an indication of the factious tendency of those times it may be stated that *conservative North Americans*, not satisfied with the nomination of Frémont, caused still another secession, and nominated Commodore Stockton for President.

**The North
Americans**

In this year (1856) the *Political Abolitionists* nominated Gerrit Smith for President and Frederick Douglass for Vice-President.²

The *Liberal Republicans* of 1872 were organized as a protest against corruption in the administration of the National Government, and to secure civil-service reform and tariff reform on free-trade lines. They had for their leaders some of the most distinguished men of the nation, —Hon. David A. Wells, ex-Governor Hoadley of Ohio.

**Liberal
Republicans,
1872**

¹ See *Century Dictionary*.

² For the Know-Nothings see pp. 98-100.

E. L. Godkin, editor of the *Nation*; Chauncey M. Depew, Horace Greeley, Charles Sumner, Charles Francis Adams, Murat Halstead, editor of the *Cincinnati Commercial*; Whitelaw Reid, of the *New York Tribune*; Horace White, of the *Chicago Tribune*; Edward Atkinson of Boston, Hon. Carl Schurz, Lyman Trumbull, John M. Palmer, and David Davis, the last three from Illinois. President Grant's scheme for the annexation of Santo Domingo to the United States had especially aroused the opposition of Greeley and Sumner; the control of State patronage and, consequently, of the party machinery by certain Senators favored in appointments by President Grant excited opposition and the consequent demand for civil-service reform. It was charged that these "senatorial bosses" were manipulating the offices for private purposes. The Liberal Republicans, therefore, stood for "reform," and "anything to beat Grant." They denounced Grant for using the powers of his office for personal ends, for keeping corrupt and unworthy men in power, for rewarding men with offices in return for personal presents, and for building up by means of patronage a tyrannical party machine that was attempting to stifle public opinion. The party pledged itself to equality before the law, to the union of the States, and the war amendments; to the removal of all Southern political disabilities, and universal amnesty; to local self-government with impartial suffrage; to a thorough reform of the civil service, to the end that "honesty, capacity, and fidelity should constitute the only valid claims to public employment, and as a means to this end" no President should be a candidate for reelection; the maintenance of the public credit; a speedy return to specie payments; opposition to further railroad grants.

Recognizing a difference within the party on free trade and protection, the party declared for "a system of Federal taxation which shall not unnecessarily interfere with the industry of the people," and "we remit the discussion of the subject to the people in their congressional districts and the decision of Congress thereon, wholly free from executive interference or dictation." The party nominated Horace Greeley of New York for President, and B. Gratz Brown of Missouri for Vice-President. The Democrats, as a means of combining all the opposition to the Republicans, endorsed both the platform and the nominations of the Liberal Republicans, but the rank and file of the Democratic party did not entirely unite in their support.

A convention of "Straight Democrats" met in Louisville in September and nominated Charles O'Connor of New York for President, and John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts for Vice-President. Though these Straight Democratic nominees drew but few votes, Greeley and Brown were overwhelmingly defeated, and Grant was triumphantly reëlected. Many of the Liberal Republicans remained permanently with the Democratic party, many returned to the Republicans, while others became professional independents, the forerunners of the Mugwumps.

The *Mugwumps* appeared in 1884, as bolting Republicans and Independents in opposition to Mr. Blaine, the presidential nominee of the Republican party.

The New York *Evening Post* in 1884 complained that the Blaine organs constantly referred to the independent Republicans as "Pharisees, hypocrites, mugwumps, transcendentalists, or something of that sort."¹ In American political history the

"Straight
Democrats"
of 1872

Mugwumps

¹ See pp. 118-119.

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Mugwumps may, then, be defined originally as one of the independent members of the Republican party who in 1884 refused to support the nominee of that party for the presidency, and either voted for the Democratic or the Prohibitionist candidate or abstained from voting. The term has come to include all independents who act on the principle of going from one party to the other according as they like or dislike the candidate put forward, or in response to their convictions on some political cause which they deem of paramount importance. George William Curtis was the most prominent of the Mugwumps, and civil-service reform is the cause to which they have been chiefly attached. The word "mugwump," like many political nicknames, first given in derision, came to be accepted as an honorable title.¹

The *Prohibitionists* came into the field in 1872, and they have regularly nominated candidates for President and Vice-President since that time. The main principle of the party has been the legislative prohibition of the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors, except for religious, medicinal, and scientific purposes. James Black of Pennsylvania was the party's first candidate for President, in 1872, and he polled 5608 votes. In 1876 General Green Clay Smith of Kentucky was nominated and he received 10,000 of the 8,000,000 votes cast. In 1880 General Neal Dow of Maine, the Nestor of Prohibition, stood as the candidate of this party, and he received a slightly increased vote over that of 1876. In 1884 John P. St. John, ex-Governor of Kansas, polled 150,000 votes

¹ See Senator George F. Hoar's article defending the Republican partisan as against the Mugwump, in the *International Review* for October, 1900.

for this party, drawing many dissatisfied Republicans of Mugwump proclivities who would not vote for Cleveland. In this year the Prohibitionists cast 25,000 votes in the State of New York, and as Cleveland was elected by the vote of that State on a plurality of only 1100 the defeat of Blaine was attributed to the defection among Republican Prohibitionists, and the election of 1884 in New York was, on this account, compared to that of 1844, when the Whig Abolitionists caused Clay's defeat by voting for Birney.¹

Since 1884 the Prohibitionists have not materially increased their voting strength, though they have stood faithfully and persistently for their cause.² The party is distinguished as being the longest-lived and most persistent third party in our history. It is composed of conscientious men of earnest convictions, especially on moral questions, and their influence, with that of their allies, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, has been very forcible and positive in many States in restraining the old parties from permitting too lax a policy toward the liquor evil. Many voters in both the Democratic and Republican parties had Prohibition leanings, and the fear that these might leave their parties for the Prohibitionists made the third-party weapon an effective instrument of education and restraint. In recent years the Prohibition voters have

¹ See p. 69.

² In 1912 the party vote declined from that of 1908 being slightly over 100,000. In 1916 they cast 221,000 votes for J. Frank Hanley, of Indiana, and in 1920, even after the 18th amendment had been adopted, the Prohibition Party cast 189,000 votes for Rev. Mr. Watkins, of Ohio. They held that the old parties were not at heart in favor of the prohibition policy and they wanted a party in power that would be heartily behind prohibition enforcement. The Anti-Saloon League, a non-partisan organization relying on the churches for support, has been a prominent agency for prohibition activity for several years.

had a tendency toward radicalism on financial and industrial issues, and in 1896, like the other parties in that eventful year, it suffered a schism in its ranks, the conservatives contending that no public expression be put forth except on the liquor traffic, and the radicals going in for free silver, government control and issue of money, woman suffrage, national control of railroads and telegraphs, and other reforms. It is largely the increased public interest in the social and industrial issues and the intensity of party contests over these that have prevented the growth of the Prohibition vote.

Labor Parties have frequently recurred in American politics. They have usually been more or less related to socialism. A labor movement began in America as early as 1830, and a "Workingman's Party" held a convention that year in New York, which was largely the result of the influence of Robert Owen, the father of early American socialism. It demanded equal rights for women, the abolition of "chattel slavery" and "wage slavery," and the abolition of all special privileges. It was called in derision the "Fanny Wright Party."¹ Labor protestants in other States opposed chartered monopolies (like certain banks and especially the second United States Bank) as infringements on the rights of the people; they denounced lotteries, which were then frequently protected by law; demanded free schools for the children of the poor; complained that workingmen were without representation and that the masses were suffering from impositions by the rich and powerful. Then slavery and the war absorbed the energies of political reformers for a generation. Labor Congresses held in 1866 and 1867 recommended

¹ Frances Wright was prominent in its councils.

hat a "National Labor Party" should be organized. The Labor Congresses resulted in a "National Labor Union" and in their meetings (1867) was set forth the first public declaration by a convention in favor of the money policy with which the Greenback party was subsequently identified. See pp. 140-144. From these meetings and discussions there evolved the *National Labor Reform Party* which held its first and only national nominating convention at Columbus, Ohio, February 21-22, 1872. Seventeen States were represented. Richard F. Trelvellick of Michigan was prominent in the party. Wendell Phillips entered the field for its cause in Massachusetts and Judge David Davis of Illinois, a Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court, thought seriously of accepting its nomination for the presidency in the hope of uniting Liberal Republicans, Democrats, and Labor party men in opposition to Grant and the Republicans. The party nominated Charles O'Connor, of New York, for President, who was also voted for by the "Straight Democrats."¹ It was charged that the party was disrupted by old party and corporate influences through professional politicians and hired agents because of dislike of the labor movement's being directed toward politics. "Socialist Labor" parties operated locally in several cities and labor centers from 1875 to 1888. In 1877 a "Workingmen's Party" became prominent in California, led by Dennis Kearney, a labor agitator, who harangued monster meetings on the "Sand Lots." The party carried San Francisco in 1879 and influenced the new constitution for California in relation to corporate capital and the exclusion of Chinese contract labor. The party was the outcome

National
 Labor Re-
 form Party

¹ See p. 251.

of hard times and it raised the cries, "The Chinese must go!" "Down with the rich!" Following 1880 other labor parties went into local politics in various parts of the country. In 1878 the Greenback party, under the influence of labor leaders, changed its name to the "Greenback Labor Party." In 1886 a "United Labor Party" was organized in Chicago, and in the same year a "United Labor Party" in New York, under the guidance of the *Central Labor Union*, named Henry George for Mayor and cast for him 68,000 votes.¹ Single Taxers, Socialists, Greenbackers, and reformers of various shades united in this and some other local contests.

These labor parties, prior to 1888, were local and transient. None of them came into the national field as a regular party to nominate candidates for President and Vice-President.² But they were preparing the way by education, agitation, and propaganda. In 1888 two regular political parties appeared in the field of presidential politics: (1) The "Union Labor Party," which was formed by a union of the "Greenback Labor Party," of rural constituency, with the city trades-union organizations which had been demanding labor and industrial reforms. (2) The "United Labor Party," a smaller body led by Rev. Father Edward McGlynn of New York, which, in addition to the other labor demands, insisted on a recognition of the principle of the single tax and the abolition of private property in land. The Union Labor party in 1888 cast a vote of 146,935 for President.

¹ Theodore Roosevelt was George's Republican opponent in this mayoralty campaign. Abram S. Hewitt, the Democratic candidate, was elected.

² Except the National Labor Reform party of 1872. See *ante*.

These parties were later merged into the Populist and Socialist movements. The record of labor parties tends to show that American workingmen have not readily cut loose in large numbers from the ties binding them to the old parties. They have usually remained Republicans or Democrats. The leaders of the present Socialist and Farmer-Labor parties are attempting to unite them into a "class conscious party" against capitalism.

Socialism has grown to such an extent in America within the last twenty years that the student of parties and politics must needs give the subject his attention. The cause itself as well as the party representing it have come so prominently into public notice and the movement is of such public interest and importance as to entitle the Socialist party to be considered the most significant of the minor parties. The Socialist leaders claim that the party is to be regarded as having "grown into a political party of the first magnitude."¹

The Socialist movement has been largely a working class movement and the parties bearing the name have been, in a sense, the successors of the Labor parties which we have just considered. There are two Socialist parties in the field today. The *Socialist Labor Party* is a small party, casting in 1912, 29,071 votes for Arthur E. Reimer for President and August Gillhaus for Vice-President. Its vote rose to only a little over 31,000 in 1920 for W. W. Cox for President and Gillhaus again for Vice-President. It was the first Socialist party to appear in the field with a presidential ticket, which it

**The
Socialists**

**The
Socialist
Labor
Party**

¹ Morris Hillquit, address before the Socialist National Convention of 1912, at Indianapolis, May 12th.

did in 1892. In that year it polled almost as many votes (21,164) as in its eighth successive campaign of 1920. As a Socialist organization it was known by this name as early as 1877. For fifteen years its movement was economic rather than political and it chiefly operated among city workers of foreign birth.¹ In national convention in New York City in 1892 the party nominated Simon Wing of Massachusetts for President and Charles H. Matchett of New York for Vice-President. The party declared for a reduction in the hours of labor, for national ownership of railroads, canals, telegraphs, telephones, and all means of transportation and communication; for municipal ownership of water works and lighting plants; the recovery of land grants by the United States; the exclusive right of the nation to issue money; progressive income and inheritance taxes; compulsory free education; employers' liability laws; the reduction of the lawmaking body to a single chamber; the direct vote and a secret ballot in all elections, with universal suffrage regardless of race, creed, or sex, and all public officers to be subject to recall; the referendum in lawmaking; and the party was so radical as to demand the abolition of the presidency and the substitution therefor of an elective executive board subject to dismissal, or recall, by the House of Representatives.

It will be noticed that the *Socialist Labor Party*, like the Populists,² was quite early in declaring for a number of present-day controverted issues. The party has since continued, substantially, to repeat this platform, demanding that the machinery of government and of production and distribution be owned and controlled

¹ See *Labor Parties*, pp. 254-256.

² See p. 147.

collectively, by the people in common. It attributes our economic ills to private property in the natural sources of production and in the instruments of labor, and it calls on all laborers to unite into "a class conscious body" to take possession of the public powers—the land and the means of production and transportation, and to substitute a coöperative commonwealth for the "present state of planless production, industrial war, and social disorder."

In 1896 the party polled 36,274 votes for Mr. Matchett for President, and in 1898 their vote reached 82,204 in eighteen States. In 1900 the party made overtures for union with the *Social Democratic Party*, though it nominated a ticket of its own,—as a means of promoting union,—Job Harriman, of California, for President, and Max Hayes, of Ohio, for Vice-President. The *Social Democratic Party* had been organized in 1897 under the leadership of Eugene V. Debs, who, as President of the American Railway Union, had led the great railway strike of 1894, and who had suffered imprisonment by injunction,—an experience that converted him to socialism. The party appealed to a large workingmen's democratic and socialist sentiment. In a convention at Indianapolis (March 6, 1900) a union of these two parties was formed, the Harriman-Hayes ticket being withdrawn and the combination uniting on Debs, a Social Democrat, and Harriman, of the Socialist Labor party, as a presidential ticket, which, in 1900, polled 87,814 votes. The greater part of the *Socialist Labor Party* favored the union and supported the ticket, but a more radical minority refused to do so, and in a convention of their own in New York they retained the old name and nominated a separate

The
Social
Democratic
Party

4/13

ticket.¹ They polled 39,249 votes for their ticket in 1900, but in 1904 the *Socialist Labor* vote shrank to 31,249 votes, and in 1908 to 15,421 for August Gillhaus.²

After 1900 the *Social Democratic Party* came to be known merely as the *Socialist Party*, and under that name Mr. Debs has been its leader and presidential candidate for five contests (1900, 1904, 1908, 1912, 1920). Under this party the greater growth of political party socialism has been achieved. The party has put forward a series of demands:

Its *Industrial Demands* include: (1) Immediate government relief for the unemployed, by public works, by re-forestry cut-over and waste lands, reclamation of swamps, and by loans of money without interest to States and cities for public improvements. (2) Forbidding the employment of children under sixteen; the abolition of official charity; and State insurance against old age and unemployment. (3) Collective ownership

¹ Joseph F. Maloney for President and Valentine Rimmel for Vice-President.

² In 1912 there was a slight increase to 29,071 votes. In 1916 their vote for Arthur E. Reimer for President was only 14,180. These separatists among the Socialists represent an extreme type of industrial socialism and they are in stout opposition to trade-unions. They are led by Daniel De Leon and are mostly disciples of Karl Marx, urging that the revolution in government and politics must be accompanied with a revolution in industry. The difference between them and the larger body of Socialists is largely one of means to a common end, a difference as to whether the reorganization of industrial society should precede or follow the triumph of political socialism. And, also, these more radical Socialists are more disposed toward the principle of the "Industrial Workers of the World," namely, the organization of labor on the basis of a whole industry rather than on that of trades or crafts. See pp. 264-265. The *Socialist Labor Party* is organized in sections, or chapters, like a brotherhood, in as many as thirty States. Any seven persons may form a "section," provided they acknowledge the platform and constitution of the party. Its members are mostly of foreign birth, perhaps only ten per cent. of the party being native Americans.

or telegraphs, railroads, telephones, steamship lines, and other means of transportation and communication, also of elevators, stockyards, warehouses, and distributing agencies. (4) Collective ownership of all industries in which competition has ceased to exist. (5) The extension of the public domain to include mines, quarries, oil wells, forests, and water power.

The party's *Political Demands* call for an extension of inheritance taxes; the graduated income tax; equal suffrage for men and women; the initiative and referendum; the abolition of the United States Senate, and of the President's veto power; direct election of the President; the amendment of the Constitution by a majority vote; the election of judges for short terms; and the abolition of the judicial power, "usurped by the Supreme Court," to declare acts of Congress null and void,—all national laws to be abrogated only by act of Congress or by a referendum vote.¹

In 1904 and 1908 the party vote stood at a little above 400,000, but in the State and congressional elections of 1910 it rose to 605,000, while in the presidential contest of 1912 it was increased to 901,725.²

The party has been accustomed to carry on an active, vigorous agitation between campaigns as well as in election years. The report of its national secretary, John M. Work, in 1912 showed that it had an active dues-paying membership of over 125,000, who pay twenty-five cents a month for educational and party purposes,—for agents, speakers, mass meetings, and the distribution of leaflets and literature.

¹ See Socialistic platforms, 1908, 1912, and 1920, *World Almanac*.

² Adding to this the Socialist Labor vote the number was not far short of a million. The Socialists claim that the Progressive candidacy of Roosevelt cut into their vote considerably.

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The party has had some triumphs in local contests and has shown notable strength in candidacies that have fallen short of election. "Golden Rule" Jones, former Mayor of Toledo, as an Independent Socialist candidate polled 130,000 votes for Governor of Ohio in 1899. Socialist mayors have been elected in several cities,¹ and Victor L. Berger, a German-American, was elected to Congress from Wisconsin in 1910 and Meyer London, Russian born, was thrice elected to Congress on the Socialist ticket from New York City (1914, 1916, 1920).

In 1916 the Socialists polled only 590,000 votes for Allen J. Benson, of New York, for President. After America's entrance into the World War there was a split in the Socialist ranks. The war itself had broken the solidarity and the aggressiveness of the Socialists in the European world. The spirit of nationalist patriotism asserted itself. Most of the intellectual leaders of the Socialist party in America, and those who were more distinctly American, supported the war; but the majority in the party conventions steadily denounced the war and opposed the draft. The more radical socialists, the "left wing," later expelled by the regulars, formed the *Communist* party, whose members proclaimed their allegiance to the *Socialist Internationale*, recently in session at Moscow, representing a world movement and a purely international loyalty directed against capitalism and the present industrial order. Thus the membership of the party was lopped off at both ends. The war spirit of the country was warm against the radicals and the "reds," many of whom were foreign agitators who were doing

¹ Emil Seidel of Milwaukee is the most notable. The Republicans and Democrats combined and defeated Mr. Seidel for reelection in 1912.

what they could to obstruct the war. Some of them were deported under the Alien Deportation Act.

Victor L. Berger became a figure of national note during the war. Berger was the first Socialist to sit in Congress.¹ He was for a second time elected to Congress in 1918, while he was under indictment for conspiracy to obstruct the draft. After his conviction in 1919 (a conviction affirmed by the Supreme Court) he was not allowed to retain his seat. After he was unseated his Milwaukee constituency elected him again at a special election, despite the fact that the Republicans and Democrats in his district combined to defeat him. Again in January, 1920, the House refused to admit Berger to his seat, holding that on account of his violation of the law he was not entitled to take the oath. His district then remained unrepresented in Congress. In 1922 Berger was again elected to Congress from Milwaukee and he now occupies a seat in the House of the 68th Congress.

In New York in 1918, five Socialists were elected to the State Legislature. They were expelled from their seats, merely on the ground of their belonging to the Socialist party, which the majority of the Legislature held to be dangerous and disloyal in doctrine and purpose. The five expelled members were immediately reelected and three of them were again unseated, though prominent Republicans like Charles E. Hughes and Col. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., protested against this illiberal proscription and the denial of the right of constituencies to be represented by men of their choice. This party intolerance helped the Socialists, as may be seen from the fact that in 1919 in New York City they polled 125,000 votes for their candidate

¹ See p. 262.

for Mayor as against 85,000 cast in the city in 1918 for their candidate for Governor.

In 1920 the Socialists, in spite of their divisions and the political proscription to which they were subjected, continued the contest as a separate political party, which they had kept up for nearly thirty years. For the fifth time they named Eugene V. Debs for President, though Debs was at the time in the Federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Ga., having been convicted of violating the Espionage Act, by a speech in opposition to the war. In the election of 1920 Debs received 919,799 votes while he was still in prison.¹

The Socialists, though in themselves a radical party, have found themselves, as we have seen, like the other parties, divided into a radical and a conservative wing. The conservatives, or the "right wing" of the Socialists, are disposed toward the peaceful evolutionary socialism of Marx and of the "intellectuals," and they regard the radicals as destructive and dangerous to the movement. The more revolutionary radicals taunt their opponents with being "office-seekers" and "yellows," and they are more in sympathy with the "Industrial Workers of the World," and, under the leadership of William D. Haywood, their tendency has been to go off into this more "advanced" form of action.² Within

¹ Debs was released from Atlanta by President Harding early in 1922.

² Haywood was lately deposed, or resigned, from the Socialist council, or general committee. The *Industrial Workers of the World* represent the most radical, not to say menacing, form of the modern labor movement in America. The movement is the American form of *syndicalism*. The *Industrial Workers* are a labor organization, not a political party. They are disposed to eschew politics and parties, and government, too, like the radical Garrisonians in the early anti-slavery movement. See pp. 62-63. They oppose trade-unions and insist on unionizing labor on the basis of an entire industry, or of all industry, rather than by crafts or trades. They claim that trade-unions tend to pit one set

and between these "wings" of socialism many kinds and degrees of Socialists may be found, the most of them being earnest and intelligent men and women, orderly, peaceful, and helpful members of society. It is, of course, a foolish error to think of Socialists as anarchists. Socialism is the opposite of anarchy. Socialists do not oppose government nor the state; nor do they wish the state to be merely a voluntary association as the anarchist desires. They would have a coöperative commonwealth. Anarchy teaches that government

of workers against another and thus help to defeat the wage-earners in a labor war, and that they mislead the laborers into thinking that the wage-earners and the employers have any interest in common. The *Industrial Workers* hold that the working class and the employing class have nothing in common; that a struggle must go on between these two classes until the workers of the world organize *as a class*, take possession of the earth, and abolish the wage system. They are not satisfied with "a fair day's wage for a fair day's work," but they wish to uproot the whole wage system and abolish capitalism entirely. They go with the *Socialists* in wishing to get rid of the employer and to place every industry in the hands of its workers, though the Socialists would do this through the *state* by political action in getting control of the government, while the *Industrial Workers* would do it by "direct action." They go with the *anarchists* in wishing to organize society without any government at all. Their principle of "direct action" ignores government, and they look upon all government as an instrument for exploiting the workers. They go with *syndicalism* (though they claim to be distinct) in their willingness to bring about the desired social revolution by the principle of "direct action" on the part of the workers. By "direct action" they do not need to wait upon reforms or gradual progress, but they may take possession of industries directly, as soon as their organization is sufficiently compact and powerful. "If you want a thing take it," is one of the maxims of their agitators. Forms of direct action are the universal strike, the boycott, the label, and *sabotage*, all designed to render present industry unprofitable, or (by *sabotage*) to obstruct manufacturing by crippling the machines, or by bad work or malicious tricks, such as scratching the varnish on furniture, putting something disagreeable in food products, dropping grease on silk products, or putting emery powder in machinery bearings. It is to make the laborer the enemy of society as at present organized.

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should control in nothing, not even to protect life and property,—“the perfect unfettered self-government of the individual and, consequently, the absence of any kind of external government.”¹ Socialism, on the other hand, teaches that government shall control in everything. It affirms that the state should own and control all the tools and plants of industry and should direct all occupations, requiring of each according to his strength and speed and giving unto each according to his weakness and need. The Socialist believes in the Trust; not the Trust for the few and by the few, but he would have the nation organized into one great Trust and allow all the people to come in for dividends. The government should prevent over-production in some lines and under-production in others. Anarchy leaves all to the individual; in socialism the individual is merged in the social community, the state. Anarchism would have no state control, except by the voluntary assent of every individual, which would be self-control. Socialism would have no individualism except in subordination to and complete subjection by the constituted authorities of the state. In all ages there have been conflicts between these two antagonistic tendencies and dispositions among mankind.

A national Labor Party was formally created in Chicago, November 24, 1919. This Labor Party appealed to the various discontented Adul-
The Na- lamites in politics, and it announced that it
tional Labor would seek to organize “all hand and brain
Party workers of the country to support the principles of a political, social and industrial democracy.”

As the outcome of a convention held in Chicago, July 10-16, 1920, this took the name “Farmer-Labor”

¹ E. V. Zenker, *Anarchism*.

arty.¹ This Chicago convention of 1920 was an attempt to combine various dissatisfied elements into a new "Liberal" party,—the Non-Partisan League, the single taxers, the committee of 48, the Labor party men, and others. Forty-three states were represented in the convention by 900 delegates. The labor group ran away with the convention. These radical labor leaders were bent on supporting a "guild socialism" and they wanted to strengthen their leadership among trade unions in order to capture the American labor movement for political action, in which the Socialists had failed—against the policy and tactics of the more conservative Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor. The hope of the radical labor men was that a class party, distinctly representing the laboring classes, might be organized in America and become as strong as the Labor party of Great Britain. The other liberals in the Convention refused to follow this small section of organized labor. Adding "Farmer" to "Labor" made the Labor party no less a class party, whose platform did not make much of an appeal to the country as a whole.² The party nomi-

¹ Not to be confused with the party of the same name in the North-west.

² The platform declares that the offices are "controlled by financial interests," the "courts are prostituted," "the people are reduced to economic and industrial servitude,"—cries like those of the Populists in 1892. It favors labor's right to strike, stripping the courts of their power of injunction in labor disputes and of their power to declare legislative acts unconstitutional; Federal judges should be elective, subject to recall; public ownership and operation of public utilities and natural resources; national and state owned banks; steeply graded income taxes, exempting \$3,000; protection of women in industry, no children under 16 to be employed; recognition of Soviet Russia, and other radical proposals. For the full platform of this party see the *World Almanac* for 1920.

nated in 1920 P. P. Christensen, of Utah, for President, and Max S. Hayes, of Ohio, for Vice President, and polled 265,411 votes. This, next to the Socialists, is the present day radical party toward which the discontented are gravitating especially in labor circles. It will become formidable when, or if, it is able to combine with the farmers of the Non-Partisan League.¹

The Non-Partisan League, to which frequent reference has been made in this chapter, is not a political party. It cuts across parties or disregards party allegiance. Originally it was a movement to better the condition of the farming classes. It was first organized in North Dakota in the spring of 1915, but within a few years it had become national in scope and was organized in fifteen States. It was a protest against unfair grain grading, trading in options, and the control of the grain and cattle markets of the Northwest by the Chambers of Commerce and business interests of Minneapolis, Chicago, and Duluth. There were substantial reasons for the League's existence. The price of the farmer's grain was fixed, not by the price in Liverpool or by the supply in Argentina, but by *The Grain Bulletin* issued each day by the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce. The big private elevator companies, some of them owning over 200 subordinate elevators in the country along the railway lines, would manipulate the price and mulct the farmer. The elevator companies would grade the wheat, marking some "rejected," and some second rate, and then would charge the farmer a good

¹ A Single Tax party was launched in 1920, and Mr. Macauley, its candidate for President, polled 5,837 votes. The leading organ of the Labor party is *The New Majority* published weekly in Chicago. The *Single Tax Review* (New York) represents that cause.

round commission for handling the product. The commission men (say, Jones & Co.), having docked the farmer, would sell the wheat at an advance of 3 cents on the bushel to Johnson & Co., and Johnson & Co. would sell at another advance of 3 cents to Peterson & Co., and on investigation it was found that all these companies are subordinate branches owned by the original Jones & Co., who, having fleeced the farmer on the first price, made several successive sales of the wheat to themselves before it reached the miller. The politicians had refused to obey the will of the people twice expressed at the polls in favor of terminal elevators, once by a vote of 51,000 to 18,000. The interests of the farmers were defiantly betrayed by a political bunch who said to some farmer lobbyist venturing to appear before a legislative committee, "The people of North Dakota be damned. Go home and slop your hogs." The farmers naturally resented this insolence and "went home" to organize; and within two years they were in control of the Government of North Dakota, whose population is over 80 per cent. agricultural.

The League is now an organization aiming to capture and control the dominant party in the respective States in which it operates, and by this means to control legislation and public policies. Its members are urged to disregard "Democratic" or "Republican" and to support either party that will give the League control of the State. While the League is not a separate, or minor, party it has very powerfully influenced politics and parties in the Northwest; and it is an organization which stands ready to furnish supplies and votes in a nation-wide campaign for the creation of a *new* political party, if circumstances seem favorable. This group is

expected to respond to discontent, to seek to eliminate the middleman, serve the producers, and combat the so-called capitalist classes. They seek to control one of the old parties, but if they fail in that they are ready for a new party.

Governor Frazier, the newly elected Senator from North Dakota, was nominated in a Republican primary and was elected on a Republican ticket, but his allegiance to the Republican party at large is negligible. He is non-Partisan. The object of these non-Partisans is to "take the party away" from their opponents within the party and use its organization and power to carry out their policies in the interests of the farmers. In North Dakota and Minnesota, preponderantly agricultural States, the League made its contests in the Republican primaries. In some other States they make their contests in the Democratic primaries, as in Montana and Oklahoma. The result in the Northwest was almost the destruction of the Democratic party as a political force, since not only Democrats of League sympathies joined with Republican Leaguers in the effort to capture the Republican party, but conservative anti-League Democrats joined with like-minded men of the Republican party to compass the League's defeat. In Minnesota conservative Democratic-Republican voters organized a "Sound Government League" to combat the "Non-Partisan League," and this led to a counter organization in the cities, known as "The People's Non-Partisan League," a farmer-labor combination, or a coalition between city and country labor. This was the combination in Minnesota that defeated both the old parties and elected Senators Shipstead and Magnus Johnson. (See pp. 222-223.)

The League has stood for public ownership of public

necessities. It favored the State's building, owning, and controlling the facilities for carrying products of the farm to the city, at the cost of carrying. It declared for a grain grading commission; standardization of rural schools; an inheritance tax on large fortunes; votes for women; increased supplies for agricultural colleges; a classification for taxation to relieve farm improvements; increasing tax on large incomes and excess profits; equal taxation of railroads, telegraph and telephone companies, mines, electric light and power companies; government manufacture of munitions—an expression of its pacifism; State hail insurance; rural credit banks at cost; State terminal elevators, warehouses, flour mills, creameries, cold storage plants; guarantee of bank deposits.

These demands indicate the general social tendency of the League's program, which led to its being denounced as "socialistic." The League conventions said during the World War that they were ready to coöperate to free the world from autocracy and establish democracy among the peoples of the earth, but they would not be unmindful of the enemies of democracy at home, who were entrenching themselves for special privilege and amassing enormous fortunes out of the world's misery.

In Minnesota the issue first urged by the Non-Partisan League was over an equitable tonnage tax on steel companies and the more effective community control of vested interests. The steel companies of the State, it was charged, had paid annually only about one per cent. upon their vast returns. The Non-Partisans declared for a net tax which would bring the tax on steel ore close to ten per cent., a proposal which was defeated by sharp practice in the Minnesota legislature of 1919. The "Sound Government" advocates raised the cry

of "Socialism" and the "red flag," and urged the voters to save Minnesota from these evils. The returns showed (in 1920) that the conservative Democrats throughout the State, not only in "the silk stocking wards of the cities" but in the country towns as well, voted in the Republican primaries in favor of the "Sound Government" candidates, which indicated that the conservative elements of the two old parties would join forces against what they deemed a radical menace. The farmers of both parties who were alike radically minded also joined forces, and when they were joined by radical city labor, these allied forces proved to be in a preponderant majority.

Few now question the evils which gave birth to the League. It was effectively organized and well financed. Sixteen dollars as an initiation fee was paid by each of its members, and over 200,000 members were enrolled. The farmers financed their own cause, but it was charged that the organizers were after "easy money" which they used for their own advantage. The League attacked real issues and proposed remedies, which, if not always wise and though designed in the interest of a class, would have wrought effective changes in favor of a class that had been outrageously exploited. The League is one of the factors which it is supposed will combine with other liberal elements in forming the forthcoming new third party whose convention is called for Minneapolis, June 17, 1924.¹ (See pp. 226, 234.)

¹ For further study of the Non-Partisan League see the following references:

A Non-Partisan Party, by Senator George W. Norris, *Senate Document No. 372*, 63rd Congress, 2nd Session.

"Facts Kept from the Farmer," *General Handbook of the National Non-partisan League*, 1918.

We have come to the closing pages of our sketch of party history without giving a definition of a party. We are to pass to the practical workings of American parties. It may be that the familiar institution of party may be better understood by an intelligent observation of its working than by an attempt at definition. Burke's classical definition is quoted elsewhere.¹ But it does not closely describe what the actual party in America really is. Mr. Bryce has briefly defined the American party as a body of citizens who are united in nominating and supporting candidates for President and Vice-President. We may think of a party as a voluntary political association through which the people seek to formulate government policies and select the officials to carry out these policies. In a genuine party not disrupted by faction the members will share the same opinions on dominant issues and favor the same public policies, though there will always be minor differences of opinion among any considerable group of men.

Definition
of a Party

The Non-Partisan League, by Andrew A. Bruce, a full and fair exposition of the movement and its effect on recent elections.

The Non-Partisan League: Its Birth, Activities and Leaders, by William Langer. Langer was at first a member of the League and was later in revolt against it. He still claims to adhere to its original industrial program. He gives an inside, near-by view.

The Non-Partisan League, by Herbert E. Gaston. (1920.) A valuable book on the League, with a fair appreciation of its causes.

The Story of the Non-Partisan League, by Charles Edward Russell. Mr. Russell is a Socialist and is sympathetic.

Among works written in Partisan hostility to the League may be mentioned *The Farmer and Townleyism*, by J. D. Bacon, and the *Non-Partisan League vs. The Home*, by J. N. Tittermore. The *Non-Partisan Leader*, Fargo, North Dakota, is the official Magazine of the League.

¹ See p. 524.

In the history of parties, as this sketch of party history may illustrate, one notices certain classes or natural divisions of men, showing different tendencies and dispositions, based, perhaps, on human nature:

Groups of
Opinion
within
Parties

1. The *Conservatives*, those who are reluctant to change, who wish to "hold fast to that which is good," who are very careful to make sure they are right before they go ahead, who are satisfied with things as they are and wish to retain the institutions of the present.

2. The *Liberals*, who are more ready for change, more progressive, and who wish to reform present institutions.

3. The *Radicals*, those who are ready for important changes, who may be willing to abolish present institutions and build anew.

4. The *Reactionaries*,¹ those who wish to return to the methods and institutions of the past. They are like the *Bourbons*, the royal rulers of old France who learned nothing and forgot nothing in the upheavals of the French Revolution and who at their restoration sought to recover and restore their privileges and powers as they had been before. The natural contest between parties occurs when the Liberals and Conservatives are pitted against one another, with the Radicals supporting the Liberals as outposts and vanguards and the Reactionaries lined up with the Conservatives, holding back like reserves in the rear. The Conservative is a routinier, sticking close to familiar routes and beaten paths,

¹ See Prof. Leacock's excellent chapter on Parties in his *Elements of Political Science*. A *radical* has been defined as one who goes too fast, a *conservative* as one who goes too slow, a *reactionary* as one who goes backward, a "*stand-patter*" as one who does not go at all.

while the radical is a *pioneer*, who is ready to venture into new fields and forests of daring enterprise.¹

Of these minor parties it will be seen that some of them have been radical and some conservative, as the same difference characterizes periods and movements in the life of the larger parties. So party history ends as it begins with this fundamental distinction between parties.

**Radicalism
vs. Con-
servatism
in Parties**

A great philosophical historian, in speaking of a "real natural history of parties," finds the division to correspond roughly to "certain broad distinctions of mind and character that never can be effaced." They are the distinctions that most historians of parties have made between conservatism and radicalism.

"The distinctions between content and hope, between caution and confidence, between the imagination that throws a halo of reverent association around the past and that which opens out brilliant vistas of improvement in the future, between the mind that perceives most clearly the advantages of existing institutions and the possible dangers of change and that which sees most keenly the defects of existing institutions and the vast additions that may be made to human well-being, form in all classes of men opposite biases which find their expression in party divisions. The one side rests chiefly on the great truth that one of the first conditions of good government is essential stability, and on the extreme danger of a nation's cutting itself off from the traditions of its past, denuding its government of all moral support, and perpetually tampering with the main pillars of the state. The other side rests chiefly on the no less certain truths that Government is an organic thing, that it must be capable of growing, expanding, and adapting itself to new conditions of thought or of society; that

¹ See Walter Lippman's *Preface to Politics*.

it is subject to grave diseases, which can only be arrested by a constant vigilance, and that its attributes and functions are susceptible of almost an infinite variety and extension with the new and various developments of national life. The one side represents the statical, the other the dynamical element in politics. Each can claim for itself a natural affinity to some of the highest qualities of mind and character, and each, perhaps, owes quite as much of its strength to mental and moral disease. Stupidity is naturally conservative. The large classes, who are blindly wedded to routine and are simply incapable of understanding or appreciating new ideas, or the exigencies of changed circumstances, or the conditions of a reformed society, find their natural place in the conservative ranks. Folly, on the other hand, is naturally radical. To this side belongs the cast of mind which, having no sense of the infinite complexity and interdependence of political problems, of the part which habit, association, and tradition play in every healthy political organism, and of the multifarious remote and indirect consequences of every institution, is prepared with a light heart and a reckless hand to recast the whole framework of the Constitution in the interest of speculation or experiment. The colossal weight of national selfishness gravitates naturally to conservatism. That party rallies round its banner the great multitude who, having made their position, desire merely to keep things as they are; who are prepared to subordinate their whole policy to the maintenance of class privileges; who look with cold hearts and apathetic minds on the vast mass of remediable misery and injustice around them, who have never made a serious effort, or perhaps conceived a serious desire, to leave the world in any respect a better place than they found it. . . . Conservatism is usually less efficient than its rival, because its leaders are paralyzed by the atmosphere of selfishness pervading their ranks, and because most of the reforming and energetic intellects are ranged among their opponents. On the other hand the acrid humors and more

turbulent passions of society flow strongly in the radical direction. Envy, which hates every privilege or dignity it does not share, is intensely democratic, and disordered ambitions and dishonest adventurers find their natural place in the party of progress and change."¹

¹ W. E. H. Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i., pp. 513-515. I have substituted the terms radical and conservative for Mr. Lecky's terms Liberal and Tory in this extract. See, also, pp. 6-8 of this volume.

Consult Haynes, *Third Party Movements*, on the subject of this chapter.

See Herbert Quick's "If They Have their Own Way," in *Saturday Evening Post*, May 21, 1921, for a list of associations interested in influencing the progress of political parties.

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PART II

AMERICAN PARTY MACHINERY AND HOW IT WORKS

CHAPTER XIII

THE RISE OF THE CONVENTION SYSTEM

THE Nominating Convention has been in use in America for about a century. It has been a growth, not a sudden creation. It has evolved by experience. It began locally in the States, and from the townships, counties, and States it extended to the national arena. The National Nominating Convention as we have known it in recent years has been one of the notable historic institutions of America. In approaching the study of this most important historic institution of American parties it may be well to note how customs have changed in making party nominations. We must trace the evolution of the presidential convention.¹

The origin of any institution is always remote. The beginnings of the nominating caucus and convention in America have been traced from colonial records as far back as 1640.² In early American society there was a ruling class, especially in New England and in Virginia—
In Colonial Times
Nominations
were Made
by a Gentry
that is to say, groups of men who, owing to their character, their wealth, and their social

¹ See M. Ostrogorski's "The Rise and Fall of the Nominating Caucus, Legislative and Congressional," *American Historical Review*, Jan., 1900.

² See Professor Howard's *Local Constitutional History of the United States*.

position, commanded the confidence of their fellow-citizens.¹ This was a class something like a landed gentry. Their leadership was accepted without question. Nominations were made by a coterie or clique of these leading citizens. These "parlor caucuses," as they were called, put forward candidates for the town or colony, and their candidates were accepted by the people. The Livingstons, Schuylers, and Clintons governed New York; a few rich merchants, according to John Adams, could carry any election in Massachusetts; the Virginia gentlemen, the rich plantation-owners, governed that Colony.² The formal nominations were made in town meetings or county meetings, but these gatherings usually merely ratified selections already made by a caucus of the leading citizens to whom the mass-meeting deferred. The suffrage was much more restricted than now, and, even then, it was not possible for all the voters to take part in political action. "To nominate candidates for elective offices which went beyond the limits of the county, the views of the inhabitants of the various counties were often ascertained by means of a very extensive correspondence. Circulars were sent out, replies received, and lists of candidates were made up from these replies. These consultations were led by a few public-spirited men with a taste for election work, who made themselves into a committee of correspondence for this purpose."³ These practices continued for some time after the adoption of the Constitution. During this period, then, there were two ways by which candidates were brought out:

¹ Ostrogorski.

² See Ford's *Rise and Growth of American Politics*, p. 10, citing John Adams's *Works*, vol. vi., p. 506.

³ Ostrogorski.

1. They were named by this self-selected caucus, or junto, of leading men, whose nominations were generally accepted.

2. A candidate might announce himself and appeal for support on the ground of the principles and policies which he advocated, or of his fitness for the office. Occasionally certain delegate bodies named a ticket, but these bodies were irregular and without authority.¹

¹ The word *caucus* is said to be a corruption of "calkers," and was early applied to a meeting of seafaring men about the shipyards of Boston for the consideration of local affairs. William Gordon in his *Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States*, says:

"More than fifty years ago Mr. Samuel Adams's father and twenty others, one or two from the north end of the town where all the ship business is carried on, used to meet, make a caucus and lay their plan for introducing certain persons into places of trust and power. When they had settled it they separated, and each used his particular influence within his own circle. He and his friends would furnish themselves with ballots, including the names of the parties fixed upon, which they distributed on the days of election. By acting in concert, together with a careful and extensive distribution of ballots, they generally carried their elections to their own mind. In like manner it was that Mr. Samuel Adams first became a representative for Boston."

John Adams wrote in his Diary in February, 1763:

"This day I learned that the caucus club meets at certain times in the garret of Tom Dawes, the adjutant of the Boston regiment. He has a large house and he has a movable partition in his garret which he takes down, and the whole club meets in one room. There they smoke tobacco till you cannot see from one end of the room to the other. There they drink flip, I suppose, and there they choose a moderator who puts questions to the vote regularly; and selectmen, assessors, collectors, wardens, fire wards, and representatives are regularly chosen before they are chosen in the town. Uncle Fairfield, Story, Ruddock, Adams, Cooper, and others are members. They send committees to wait on the merchants' club, and to propose in the choice of men and measures. Captain Cunningham says they have often solicited him to go to these caucuses, they have assured him benefit in his business, etc."

The next step in the development of the nominating system is to be seen in the *Congressional and Legislative Caucus*. In the election of Jefferson, in 1800, party lines were for the first time distinctly drawn.

The Con-
gressional
Caucus

"As the democratic spirit grew," says Mr. Bryce, "the people would no longer acquiesce in self-appointed chiefs." Party members of State legislatures began to be recognized as the proper persons to make nominations for the State offices, and party members of Congress to nominate the national candidates. Each party held a Congressional caucus to nominate candidates of that party for the presidency and vice-presidency, and each party in the State legislature held a caucus to name the party candidates for governor and other State offices. This Congressional and Legislative caucus was a perfectly natural development, an outgrowth of the sentiment and conditions of the times. For a territory so large as a State it was not easy to secure a general meeting which would be representative of all the different localities. A journey to the State capital was a formidable undertaking, and it was difficult to find men of leisure willing to leave their homes and make a hard journey merely for the sake of a temporary duty. Party representatives as members of the legislature were already at the capital. These would know better than any one else who were best qualified for the offices and what candidates could command the most votes. Therefore, the members of both Houses belonging to the same party met semi-officially, generally in the legislative building itself, made their selections, and communicated them to the voters by means of a proclamation, which they signed individually. Sometimes other signatures of well-known citizens who

happened to be in the capital at the time were added, to give more weight to the recommendation of the legislators.¹ John Jay was proposed in this way as the Federalist candidate for governor of New York. After 1796, it appears to be the settled practice in all the States.

As in the States the legislative caucus arose to nominate the governor, lieutenant-governor, and the presidential electors (where these were chosen by popular vote), so in the national arena the Congressional caucus arose to nominate to the presidency and the vice-presidency. In the first two presidential elections of 1789 and 1792, the choice of candidates was by general consent. In 1796, in spite of some intrigue against him, John Adams was elected by the free and independent choice of the presidential electors, without a previous nomination. In the election of 1800, the first party contest, the party members of Congress who had previously caucused—that is, conferred—on policies and measures, now reached out to effect the presidential nominations, and thus to control the choice of the voters. Jefferson was accepted by the Republican caucus as a matter of course. The Federalist caucus was the first of the two, and it was held in secret for the purpose of circumventing Jefferson's election, and thus preventing the triumph of Democratic radicalism. The Republicans denounced this as a "Jacobinical conclave," though they also held their caucus in secret. In 1804, the caucus reappeared among the Republicans, but it was no longer held in secret.

"The Federalists, who were almost annihilated as a party by Jefferson's victory in 1800, gave up holding caucuses

¹ Ostrogorski, *American Historical Review*, Jan., 1900, p. 257.

altogether. Henceforth there met only a Republican congressional caucus which appeared on the scene every four years at the approach of the presidential election. To strengthen itself in the country it provided itself (in 1812), with a special organ in the form of a corresponding committee, in which each State was represented by a member and which saw that the decisions of the caucus were respected. Sometimes the State caucuses intervened in the nominations of candidates for the presidency; they proposed names, but in any event the congressional caucus always had the last word. Thus in 1808, with two powerful competitors for the succession to Jefferson, Madison and Monroe, both put forward in the influential caucus of Virginia, the congressional caucus pronounced for Madison while taking the formal precaution to declare that the persons present made this recommendation in their 'private capacity as citizens.' Several members of Congress who did not favor Madison appealed to the country, protesting not only against the regularity of the procedure of the caucus, but against the institution of the caucus itself. The caucus none the less, won the day, the whole party in the country accepted its decision, and Madison was elected."¹

From this time on the Congressional caucus grew into disfavor, though it continued to make presidential nominations until 1824. In the latter year, however, its candidate, William H. Crawford of Georgia, was not accepted by the rank and file, and he came out third in the list of candidates. The revolt against the caucus became quite positive as early as 1812, when the New York Legislature brought out De Witt Clinton, a Jeffersonian Republican, against Madison, the regular candidate, with a protest against the working of the

¹ Ostrogorski, *American Historical Review*, Jan., 1900, pp. 261, 262.

caucus. It was urged against the caucus that the Constitution-makers were very careful to provide that Congress should not elect the President; now a party majority of Congressmen were doing so, and they had gone so far as to do so in a secret caucus. The *people* were to elect the President, not as they elect their representatives, nor through these representatives, but by the States in their separate, sovereign capacity. A coterie of Congressmen had usurped a function belonging to the people of the States.¹

Ground of
Unpopularity of the
Congressional
Caucus

In 1816, when the caucus met again, Clay proposed a motion declaring that a caucus nomination was inexpedient. The motion was rejected. When Monroe was nominated Clay moved to make the nomination unanimous.² The caucus fell into further disfavor this year from the fact that Crawford, whom the people had never thought of for the presidency, came very near to securing the caucus nomination. Monroe was nominated by only eleven votes. The caucus candidates had always been the recognized leaders of the party and had represented fairly well the political sense of the people. But when it was suggested that a political manipulator like Crawford, whom the rank and file did not look upon as a fit man for the presidency, might become the caucus nominee, opposition

¹ The Tennessee Legislature, in a paper prepared by Felix Grundy, a Jackson supporter, denounced the caucus for the following reasons: (1) It was against the spirit of the Constitution. (2) It was inexpedient and impolitic. (3) Members of Congress might become the final electors and ought not to prejudge the case by pledging themselves to a previous nomination. (4) It violated the equality of the weaker States, since a mere majority decided in the caucus. (5) Caucus nominations became authoritative and endangered the liberties of the people. See Beard's *Readings in American Government and Politics*, pp. 112-120.

² Niles's *Register*, vol. x., p. 59.

to the caucus was still further increased. The caucus candidate was looked upon as the "regular" party candidate, and the caucus influence tended to urge upon the people the idea that its decision was binding in honor upon all the adherents of the party. Democratic doctrines had come in with Jefferson, and it was now urged by the opponents of the caucus that Democratic practices and customs should come in too. A member of Congress expressed the public feeling as follows in 1814:

"The members of the two Houses meet in caucus and there ballot for President and Vice-President. This modest recommendation then comes before the legislatures of the States. These may elect the electors, or make out a list for the people to elect. So the Chief Magistrate of the nation owes his office principally to aristocratic intrigue, cabal, and management. Pre-existing bodies of men, not the people, make the appointment. These bodies are naturally directed by a few leaders whose talents, boldness, or activity give them ascendancy over their associates. These leaders are accessible to corruption."¹

This Democratic opposition to the aristocratic caucus found its most complete development in the new West. The West had no past, no traditions. It was permeated with the spirit of equality. Its pioneer home-hunters were all alike, in antecedents, habits, and conditions. These people had been taught that they were the sovereigns, the rulers, in America; they should know no superiors. The sovereign people were not in need of the intelligence of a superior class,—there was no such class. So-called lead-

¹ Speech of Gaston, *Annals of Congress*, Jan., 1814, cited by Ostrogorski.

The Demo-
cratic West
Fosters
Opposition
to the
Caucus

ing citizens, whether in official or in private life, should no longer dictate to the people the choice of their representatives or their candidates for President. Jackson as a candidate, the idol and champion of the people, was the embodiment of this feeling. Jackson "was brought forward by the masses," as Benton expressed it. With the official caucus, with the leaders who presumed to determine the people's choice, Jackson would have no chance; but the people would elect him of their own accord. Jackson's influence, therefore, and the Western Democracy behind him, urged on the opposition to the caucus. Niles said in 1824:

"I would rather that the sovereignty of the States should be re-transferred to England than that the people should be bound to submit to the dictates of such an assemblage. But the people will not succumb to office hunters. . . . The great mass of the American people feel that they are able to judge for themselves; they do not want a master to direct them how they shall vote."¹

The caucus was made to appear not only as an encroachment on the sovereignty of the people, but as especially alarming in that its functions were exercised in the atmosphere of executive patronage. "Make me President," a candidate might say, "and I'll make you Secretary, or provide you a good berth." Thus the President and Congress, who were intended by the wise framers of the Constitution to act as checks upon one another, act in collusion against the spirit of the Constitution.² Before the election of 1824 came on, presidential candidates were brought out by the various States. Nominations were made by resolutions of

¹ Niles, vol. xxi., p. 338, January 26, 1822.

² King's attack on the caucus. See Ostrogorski.

State legislatures. In as many as twelve States, by 1824, the action of the Congressional caucus had been anticipated in this way. The friends of all the candidates except those of Crawford resolved to take no part in the caucus. It was known that Crawford had the largest number of friends in Congress and that he would be nominated, and if the friends of the other candidates attended they would be bound, according to the unwritten law of the caucus, to abide by its decision and support its candidate. Two thirds of the Republican members of Congress refused to meet in caucus. But Crawford's partisans persisted in having one. It was held February 14, 1824, in the hall of Congress. Out of two hundred and sixteen members summoned, sixty-six responded to the call. Crawford was unanimously nominated, but instead of strengthening him this endorsement probably weakened him before the people. The opposing candidates united in denouncing the caucus, painting its intrigue and corruption, and they thus made it odious and broke it down. With Crawford's defeat "King Caucus was dethroned," and no effort was ever made to restore this king to favor and power after 1824.

Before leaving this subject we must note what is known as the "mixed" caucus. It happened in the legislative caucus, which was composed of the party members of the legislature, that the districts in which the party was in a minority were left unrepresented; yet decisions were made which bound the party in the whole State. This was a serious defect. Those districts in the State which sent Federalist representatives to the assembly were wholly unrepresented in the Republican caucus, while Republican districts were unrepresented in the

**The Mixed
Caucus**

Federalist caucus. Consequently the custom grew up, to some extent, of admitting to the caucus delegates elected by the members of the party in the districts which had no representatives of the party in the legislature. Thus a popular element was introduced into the caucus, not from the feeling that it was usurping popular rights, but because it did not provide for fair and complete representation. These general conventions or "mixed caucuses" were made up of party legislators and delegates from counties and districts whose legislative members belonged to the other party. They were held as early as 1807.¹ The mixed caucus was destined to give way to the pure convention.²

The period from 1824 to 1832 was a period of transition from the Congressional caucus to the National Nominating Convention. In this period nominations were made in a variety of ways —by State legislatures, by mass-meetings, by newspaper announcements, and by a general concurrence of party meetings and agencies. A nomination made in one State would be seconded in another, and if named in different parts of the country and in a sufficient number of

**Period of
Transition
from the
Caucus to
the Con-
vention**

¹ "Pennsylvania Politics Early in this Century," W. M. Meigs, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. xvii., 1894, cited by Ostrogorski; also "The Development of the Nominating Convention in Rhode Island," by Neil Andrews.

² Distinction should be made between the old legislative *nominating* caucus and the present caucus of party members in State legislatures. The latter is still held regularly to decide on party policies, to name candidates whose election may be ratified by the legislature, and to consider other party business. This caucus is a means of enabling the party to act unitedly on legislative policies. Objection is made to its secretism and to the consequent fact that its members may speak and act without responsibility to the public

places, the nominee would be regarded as one of the leading candidates. The Anti-Masonic Convention of 1831 was the first delegate National Convention and the first to arrange for a convention in which representation should be based on the representation of the respective States in the National Congress. This, however, as subsequent events have shown, was not true party representation, as it provided for the representation of the whole population of a State rather than the party strength within a State. In recent years the Republican party has changed this basis of representation and has sought to secure a more equitable basis of representing the party constituency. (See pp. 298, 299.)

In this Anti-Masonic convention of 1831 there were 112 delegates from 13 States, there being 24 States in the Union at the time. The Whigs held a convention the same year, nominating Clay, and the Democrats held a convention to name a running mate for Jackson, whose candidacy for a second term was taken for granted. From that day to this, while the National Convention has changed in many minor ways, in the number of delegates, in the manner of electing these, in its rules of procedure, the fundamental principle on which it is based has remained the same, namely, the democratic representation of the party constituency. The old Congressional caucus was tinged with aristocratism. The parties demanded an organization wherein each voter should have "an equal share in determining his party candidate and his party platform."¹ This organization was completed for the Democratic party about 1835; for the Whigs only a few years later. This is one of the results of the democratization of the

¹ Bryce, vol. ii., p. 80.

country under Jackson.¹ All parties since have organized and developed on the same lines.

"The essential feature of this convention system is that it is from top to bottom strictly representative. This is because it has power, and power can flow only from the people. The permanent part of the party organization, the committee system that exists for the purpose of conducting the campaign and carrying the election and calling the next convention, has no power. Its object is to manage party business, such as is left to voluntary agencies. These committees undertake to create and stimulate opinion. But when a party policy or a party candidate is to be chosen and the party is to command a course of action which the members of the party are expected to obey,—such action must be taken by a representative body."²

Whether or not the Convention is actually representative depends upon the activity of the party members in their local primaries. A clique of politicians in the several districts and States may manipulate the local conventions and thus in the source of the appointing power the National Convention may not be representative of the voting constituency, but the delegates so appointed may reflect for the sake of success in the election the public sentiment and desire of the party, and in this sense the Convention may be representative. The National Convention is now under indictment. It is charged that it no longer represents the masses of the party voters; that it is engineered and controlled by machine politicians and bosses in alliance with corrupt wealth, and that a new and more popular system must arise to take its place. As the democratic

¹ See the Author's *The American Republic and Its Government*, p. 131.

² Bryce, vol. ii., p. 80.

advance in Jackson's time brought the Convention into use for the sake of truer representation of the people, so now, it is claimed, it must be displaced by presidential primaries or some better method of nominating, in order that the people may effectually control their parties and be really represented in their action.

President Wilson, while urging nation-wide presidential primaries,¹ suggested the retention of national party conventions, but only for the purpose of declaring and accepting the verdict of the primaries and formulating the platforms of the parties. "These conventions should consist of the nominees for Congress, the nominees for the vacant seats in the Senate of the United States, the Senators whose terms have not yet closed, the National Committees, and the candidates for the presidency themselves, in order that platforms may be formed by those responsible to the people for carrying them into effect."²

It is safe to say the Convention will either become more answerable to popular control or be abandoned.³

¹ See p. 196.

² Wilson's Annual Message (Address) to Congress, Dec. 2, 1913.

³ The convention system and the primary are discussed in subsequent chapters. See pp. 270 *sq.*, 295 *sq.*, 479 *sq.*

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CHAPTER XIV

THE COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION

THE party machine is the party organization. This consists of the national, State, and local party committees, and the conventions which are called and provided for by these committees. The organization, or machine, may be considered under two heads:

1. The Permanent Part—the continuing committees which are always in existence ready for party service, though their membership may change from year to year.

The Per-
manent and
Temporary
Parts of
the Party
Machine

2. The Temporary Part—consisting of the conventions of the party which meet at appointed times to formulate party platforms and policies, nominate candidates, renew the committees,—in brief, to legislate for the party and to appoint or reappoint its executive agents, the committeemen.

The permanent party machine, or organization, is now in working order for the manufacture of the next President. Its permanency will be partly understood when we say that this party machine or organization has been in continuous existence for the Democratic party since 1836, and for the Republican party since 1856. The composition and processes of this permanent machine and of the temporary conventions held under

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its direction, what they are and how they operate, may best be understood from a description of their work during a presidential year. From the first act to the last in the process of making a President we have to note what various party organs are concerned, what they do, and how and why they do it. The purpose of this part of the volume is to study the party machinery in actual operation.

The various steps in the process of President-making by our party and electoral machinery may be summarized as follows:

1. The meeting of the National Committee, on call of the chairman, for the purpose of naming the time and place of the next National Convention.
2. The Committee publishes a *call* for the Convention.
3. State and District Conventions or Primaries appoint Delegates.
4. The National Convention nominates candidates for President and Vice-President.
5. The State Conventions nominate presidential electors.
6. The conduct of the campaign.
7. The presidential election in November.
8. The meeting of the Electoral College, on the first Monday in January.
9. The transmission of the vote.
10. The counting of the electoral vote in the joint session of the two Houses of Congress on the second Wednesday in February.
11. Declaring the result.
12. The inauguration.

In following this process we shall be brought to the discussion of important political organs and their uses.

Composition of National Convention 297

As the first act in the campaign the chairman of the National Committee, of his party, calls the Committee to meet for the purpose of appointing a time and place for holding the National Convention.

The National Committee will usually meet in Washington, D. C. Washington is the political capital of the country, the political headquarters, especially while Congress is in session. Many members of the National Committee are members of Congress, and the national capital is, therefore, the most convenient place for the Committee to meet. The Democratic Committee usually meets on the 22d of February of a presidential year, the Republican Committee in January or December. While the Republicans have no fixed time for the meeting of their Committee, custom has made it at least six months before the date to be set for the convention.

The chief purpose of this meeting is to issue the *call* for the National Nominating Convention. The following is from the official call for the Republican National Convention for 1924:

1. Meeting
of the
National
Committee

2. Call for
the National
Convention

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 12, 1923.

To the Republican Voters of the United States:

In pursuance of the rules adopted by the Republican National Convention of 1920, the Republican National Committee directs that a National Convention of delegated representatives of the Republican Party be held in the City of Cleveland, in the State of Ohio, at eleven o'clock A.M., on Tuesday, the 10th day of June, 1924, for the purpose of nominating candidates for President and Vice-President, to be voted for at the Presidential Election on Tuesday,

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November 4, 1924, and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before it.

The Voters of the several States and of Alaska, Hawaii, Porto Rico, the Philippine Islands and the District of Columbia who are in accord with the principles of the Republican Party, believe in its declaration of policies, and are in sympathy with its aims and purposes, are cordially invited to unite under this call in the selection of Delegates to said Convention.

Said National Convention shall consist of

(a) DELEGATES AT LARGE

1. Four Delegates-at-Large from each State.
2. Two additional Delegates-at-Large for each Representative-at-Large in Congress from each State.
3. Two Delegates-at-Large each for Alaska, District of Columbia, Porto Rico, Hawaii, and the Philippine Islands.
4. Three additional Delegates-at-Large from each State casting its electoral vote, or a majority thereof, for the Republican nominee for President in the last preceding Presidential election.

(b) DISTRICT DELEGATES

1. One District Delegate from each Congressional District.
2. One additional District Delegate from each Congressional District casting 10,000 votes or more for any Republican elector in the last preceding Presidential election or for the Republican nominee for Congress in the last preceding Congressional election.

An equal number of Alternates is provided for.

By this Call each State has four delegates-at-large, but those States which were carried by the Republicans for President in 1920 are given three additional delegates-at-large. Each State is given two delegates for each Congressional district within the State, unless

the party vote for President or Congressman in the preceding election fell under 10,000 votes, in which case only one delegate goes to the Convention from that district. This rule, which is the same as for the National Convention of 1920, continues the cut in the representation from some of the Southern States where the Republican vote for Congress is very small. A further cut in Southern representation was desired and expected for the Convention of 1924, but instead the Committee increased the representation from the "Solid South" by 9 delegates. At the same time it added 114 delegates to the States carried by Harding in 1920. The Republican National Convention of 1920 had 984 delegates; that of 1924 had 1109 delegates. The increase comes largely to the Republican States of the North, by the addition to each of these of three delegates at large.¹

The delegates and alternates are to be elected either (1) by primary election in such States as require the delegates to the National Convention **Methods of** to be elected by direct primaries, the election **Choosing** being held in accordance with the laws of such **the** States. (2) By Congressional or State Con- **Delegates** ventions, to be called by Congressional or State Committees. Notice of the call for any such Convention shall be published in newspapers of general circulation not less than fifteen days prior to the convention.

In electing the delegates no State law is to be observed which denies or abridges equality of rights among American citizens. Delegates and alternates shall be elected not earlier than 30 days after the date of this

¹ Tennessee and Kentucky are not included in the "Solid South" as Tennessee went for Harding in 1920 and no district in Kentucky has fewer than two delegates.

call, and not later than 30 days before the meeting of the Convention, unless the laws of a State provide otherwise. Credentials of delegates and alternates must be forwarded to the Secretary of the Republican National Committee, Washington, D. C., (Munsey Building), at least twenty days before the meeting of the Convention, for use in making up the temporary roll of the Convention, unless some State laws for the election of delegates make this impossible. Notices of contests shall be forwarded in writing within the same time and manner, setting forth the ground of the contest. When more than the authorized number of delegates are reported to the Secretary, a contest shall be deemed to exist. Claimants to seats are notified and their respective claims are submitted to the whole Committee for decision as to which claimants shall be placed on the temporary roll of the Convention. Herein the Committee may exercise great power (as it often has) in controlling the action and candidates of the conventions.¹ (See pp. 192, 376.)

The Democratic "call" is much shorter, merely citing the traditional number of delegates, twice as many to each State as its electoral vote, and leaving the method of selecting the delegates entirely to the will of the respective States, or to the party organization therein. The necessity of readjusting representation has not appeared to apply to the Democratic party, although certain States of the Northwest, where in recent years the Democratic vote has almost disappeared, still have voting strength in a Democratic national convention out of all proportion to the number of their Democratic

¹ The State delegations to the Republican National Convention vary from 9 from Nevada to 91 from New York. Pennsylvania has 79, Illinois 61, Ohio 51, Massachusetts 39, Missouri 39, Indiana and Michigan 33 each. South Carolina has 11, four at large, and one from each of her seven Congressional districts.

voters. This condition of the party, however, is thought to be only temporary and to be unlike that of the Republican party in the South. Still it seems that a really democratic representation would require the States to be represented in the national conventions, not on the basis of population, but on the basis of party strength within the respective States. (See pp. 292, 298.)

In the Democratic Convention six delegates and six alternates are allotted to each of, the District of Columbia, the Philippines, Hawaii, Porto Rico, Alaska, and the Canal Zone. The National Committee further provided in order "to give adequate representation to women as delegates-at-large without disturbing prevailing party custom, there may be elected from each State four delegates-at-large for each Senator in Congress from such State, the eight delegates at large to have one vote each," and the Committee recommended to the party in the States that one half of the number of delegates-at-large should be women.¹

A matter of temporary importance, and the one which excites the greatest public interest and attention at this meeting of the Committee, is the choice of a convention city. Delegations from rival cities appear before the Committee. In the early years of the conventions Baltimore had the distinction of being known as the "Convention City." It was easy of access, half-way between the North and the South, and it was supposed not to be decisively permeated with either Northern or Southern influence. In later years Chicago has

Naming the
Convention
City

¹ This will make 1098 votes in the Democratic Convention though there will be 96 additional delegates representing the States at large, each State having eight delegates at large (with a half vote each) instead of four as heretofore.

more frequently than any other city entertained the National Conventions. In its location and from its railroad facilities Chicago is more easily and fairly accessible from all parts of the country. The size of the city, its large auditoriums, and its hotel accommodations enable it to entertain the immense crowds of delegates and visitors that assemble at these quadrennial conventions. It is quite desirable, if not almost essential, that the convention city should be a city of the first class, affording these conveniences and facilities. But it is not always from these considerations that the National Committee chooses the place for the Convention. It may be deemed good politics, as a means of influencing the political opinion of a community, to have the Convention meet in a particular section of the country; it may be claimed that to choose Indianapolis would be to secure for the party the electoral vote of Indiana, or to choose Kansas City would make sure of the votes of Kansas and Nebraska. It is not evident that the Convention carries with it such influence in the election. The friends of a particular candidate in control of the Committee may deem it inadvisable in the interest of their candidate to have the Convention held, for instance, in New York, or Philadelphia, where, presumably, the influence locally of the press and party would be adverse; and, again, a responsible commercial delegation from a city may offer

Considerations Determining the Choice of the Convention City

to the Committee a money donation to the campaign fund of the party, and offer to pay all the expenses of the Convention in exchange for the choice of their city. A committee of fifty or sixty business men from a city seeking the Convention make a trip to Washington, and these, combined with the

Senators and Representatives of that section of the country, importune the National Committee and present the "claims" of their city. This is generally done to bring visitors and money to the city, and the effort to "land" the Convention is made by local business men and hotel interests regardless of politics. In 1900, Philadelphia promised to the Republican National Committee a donation of \$100,000 to bring the Convention to that city, and Kansas City offered \$50,000 and the expenses of the Convention to the Democratic Committee. The money offer is often a decisive factor in the choice of the Committee. In more recent years the same process has been followed, and in this way and by the attraction of its climatic condition in July, San Francisco attracted the Democratic convention in 1920.

After the National Committee has appointed the time and place for the National Nominating Convention, the next act in the work of the party machine is the appointment of delegates to the Convention. This is done by State and district conventions, or by presidential preferential primaries.

**3. Appoint-
ment of
Delegates
by State
and District
Conventions**

The traditional number of delegates from the States to the National Convention has been as follows¹: *Four delegates-at-large* from each State—that is, double the number of United States Senators to which the State is entitled. If the State has a Congressman-at-large in the Lower House, two more delegates-at-large are added.

**Number of
Delegates**

Two delegates are allotted to each Congressional district of the State. Thus each State has twice as many delegates as it has Senators and Representatives in Congress, or twice as many as its electoral vote.

¹ For recent changes in the Republican Convention see pp. 297, 298.

Nevada has three electoral votes, one for each of its Senators and one for its Representative in Congress. New York has forty-five electoral votes, two for its Senators and forty-three for its Representatives. In the National Conventions Nevada has six delegates and New York ninety. Before 1852 the numbers in the National Conventions were the same as in the Electoral College, one delegate for each elector. For twenty years after 1852, in the Democratic Convention, the numbers were increased to two delegates for each elector, but each delegate had only half a vote. In 1872 the Democratic Convention gave each delegate a whole vote, while the number of delegates remained double that of the electors. The Republicans adopted this rule of membership in 1860, and it has been the rule of both parties since 1872.² In 1912, in addition to the State delegates the Republicans allotted six delegates from each of the Territories, New Mexico and Arizona, (which have since become States), six from Hawaii and two delegates each from the District of Columbia, Alaska, Porto Rico, and the Philippine Islands. This provided for a convention of 1078 delegates and as many alternates, making 540 (a majority) necessary to the choice of a presidential candidate. The Democrats, since 1896, have provided for six delegates from each of the above named places, making their full convention number 1092 delegates, with 728 votes (two thirds) necessary to a choice in making a presidential nomination.³

In the Republican Convention the Territorial dele-

² Professor Macy, *Chicago Record*, Monday, March 13, 1900.

³ This party representation in National Convention is based on the Congressional Apportionment Act of Congress of August, 1911. By this and by the admission of New Mexico and Arizona, the Electoral College was increased from 483 in 1908 to 531 in 1912.

gates have always voted as other delegates, but in the Democratic Convention the Territorial delegates have no votes,—a fact which again indicates the disposition of the Democratic party to govern, or to choose its rulers and its candidates, by the action of States. In addition to the delegates an equal number of alternates are elected to act in case of the absence of the delegates. The alternates are elected at the same time and in the same manner as the delegates; they sit in the Convention immediately behind the delegates, and act as delegates in case their principals are absent.

The delegates-at-large, seldom more than four for each State, were formerly always elected by the State convention of the party. The Congressional district delegates were selected by conventions in the district called by the Congressional committee of each district, in the manner of nominating a Congressman from that district. Often the Congressional candidate and the national delegates were named at the same district convention. The Democratic practice was usually to select the national delegates by the delegations from each Congressional district to the State convention. The State convention then ratified the selection of the district delegations at the same time that it made choice of the delegates-at-large from the State. The delegation was thereby more distinctly recognized as a State delegation and was subject to State instructions, although named, in the first instance, in separate assemblies of district delegates. This is consistent with the democratic tendency of looking to the State as the unit in party action. The Whigs very early favored the choosing of delegates by Congressional districts “as

How Delegates are Elected

Statehood Recognized in the Democratic Practice in Selecting Delegates

being most democratic and best calculated to bring out the real sentiments of the people."¹ In 1892 the Republican Convention passed a rule binding the party in every State to elect its delegates by districts.² If in any Congressional district there was no Congressional committee, the State committee of the party either called the district convention, appointing the time and place of meeting and apportioning delegates to the different counties; or the State committee appointed from among the party adherents residing in that district a committee for the purpose of calling a district convention to elect delegates to represent the district. This is more especially true of the Republican practice.³ The Territorial delegates were appointed by conventions under the supervision of committees appointed by the National Committee, in the manner of nominating Territorial delegates for Congress.

Within recent years many of the States have adopted the primary system for choosing the delegates to the National Conventions. This is by a direct popular vote of the party.⁴ In certain States where the delegates are still appointed by conventions the people have been given the benefit of the "presidential preference primary," by which the preference of the party's voters among the presidential candidates may be expressed in a primary election and the delegates to the Convention are expected to carry out the preference expressed, by supporting the candidate preferred by the voters.⁵

¹ See Niles's *Register*, vol. lvii., p. 210. Nov. 30, 1839.

² Macy, *Chicago Record*, March 12, 1900.

³ For the Democratic practice, see p. 305.

⁴ Members of the National Committee are also chosen in this way in some of the States. See p. 299.

⁵ In 1913 Mr. W. J. Bryan expressed the opinion that the Democratic party would never hold another national nominating convention, but

The Progressive Democrats and Progressive Republicans sought to have this system extended in 1912, and they urged their respective party National Committees to provide for it in the "calls" for the Convention. The majority of the members of the Committees, who were charged by the "Progressives," with being machine politicians and reactionaries, refused this request, leaving the method of choosing the delegates to the "discretion of the State and Territorial party committees," and "subject to the laws of the several States." This permitted but did not require a primary election. The State party committees were known to be generally unfavorable to preferential primaries or the popular choice of delegates. But through popular pressure and hurried action by their Governors and Legislatures the new method of choosing and instructing the delegates was obtained for the contest of 1912 in several of the States. This popular method of choosing the national delegates, or of allowing the voters to express directly at the ballot-box their choice for President, will no doubt become more common.¹ The Democratic

that the people in their primaries will decide upon candidates and policies, and President Wilson officially urged upon Congress legislation to this end. Annual message (address) Dec. 2, 1913.

¹ In 1912 thirteen States had some form of the presidential primary. In Pennsylvania and South Dakota there is no preferential vote but the delegates are elected directly. In Pennsylvania, only the Congressional district delegates are so chosen; the delegates at large are elected by the State convention, but the delegates to this convention are chosen by a direct vote. The candidates for delegates, in district and State, may indicate in the primary whom they will support for President. So the delegate is committed when he is chosen. In Illinois, Michigan, and Maryland provision is made for a presidential preference vote, but delegates are still elected at conventions. By manipulation, in ways known to shrewd convention managers, delegates may be elected by these conventions who are at heart opposed to the candidate receiving a majority of the preferential vote. They may profess a willingness to

Convention in 1912 declared that "the movement toward more popular government should be promoted through legislation in each State which will permit the expression of the preference of the electors (voters) for national candidates at presidential primaries." And the Convention directed that the National Committee should incorporate in the call for the next nominating Convention a requirement that all expressions of preference for presidential candidates shall be given, and that all delegates and alternates be elected at a primary in every State not already providing for such primary by law.¹

The National Committee is in session several days prior to the meeting of the Convention and it hears contests and decides which of the contesting delegations shall sit in the Convention during the preliminary proceedings.

If the election of any of the delegates is contested, all notices of contest must be submitted in writing, accompanied by a printed statement setting forth the ground of contest, to be filed with the secretary of the National Committee twenty days prior to the meeting of the National Convention. This provision is contained in the Republican "call." (See pp. 297, 298.) These papers

**Contested
Seats in the
Convention**

support the candidates preferred by the people and may go through the *form* of supporting him for a few ballots to enable them to claim that they have carried out their instructions; but in an emergency and in many ways that are most effective they will withhold support. No delegate who is at heart opposed to the popular primary decision should be sent to the Convention. In eight States (Ore., O., N. Dak., Wis., N. J., Neb., Cal., Mass.), there is provision for a preference vote and a direct choice of delegates.

¹ Democratic Platform, 1912.

relating to contested delegations are then presented to the Committee on Credentials appointed by the Convention, and are passed upon in the order in which they were filed. This gives great power to the National Committee, as it may thus determine the organization and complexion of the Convention. In late Conventions factional fights and bitter feeling have resulted from the exercise of this power by the Committee. Contests may be gotten up—"trumped up"—in the interest of a candidate, and the Committee by its decision may give the control of the Convention to the friends and adherents of a particular candidate or certain interests. It was charged in 1912 by Mr. Roosevelt and his supporters that in this way and by unfair decisions the Committee determined the action and nomination of the Republican Convention,—that the Committee instead of the Republican voters made the nomination and decided the course of the party.

The function of the National Committee is to manage the business of the party between campaigns and to promote the success and the election of the party candidates during the campaign. It is not to decide who the candidates shall be nor to determine the party policies; these are to be determined by "the sovereign voters of the party in convention assembled," through their properly elected delegates. Such is the theory. But the party committeemen are in a position largely to control party action and they do so to a very considerable degree, though not without arousing opposition and resentment on the part of the party faction opposed to their plans and purposes. The faction in control of the organization is anxious to retain control and at times in the past they have gone too far in doing that and have, thereby, caused party

schism and defeat, as in 1912. However, it is but fair to say that in recent years the Committee is seeking to act judicially and fairly as between contending factions, though its weight (which is always powerful) will usually be thrown to renominate a party President against an insurgent candidate.¹

The district plan of electing the delegates is comparatively recent. Formerly, in both parties, the delegates for the whole State were appointed by the general State convention, and in some parts of the country, especially in New York and the Eastern States, this is still the custom in the Democratic party. State appointment recognizes the delegation as representing the State, and it gives greater power and prestige to the State as such, enables it to act as a unit, and this may account for the greater favor with which it is met in the Democratic party, as that is the party

Rise of the
District
Plan of
Election.
It is More
Democratic

¹ How a national committee and its managers seek to hold on to the organization and to control the personnel of a convention by favoring and seating certain contested delegations is related in Joseph B. Bishop's *Presidential Nominations and Elections*, Chap. XIII., on "The Steam Roller Convention" (1912). Finley Peter Dunne (Mr. Dooley) wrote of that convention in the *American Magazine* for Sept., 1912:

"After Mr. Victor Rosewater had been instructed in his duties as acting chairman of the National Committee by the delectable three—William Barnes, Murray Crane, and Boise Penrose—and had rehearsed his decision on the right of the National Committee to seat the Taft delegates (which was prepared for him) until he was almost letter perfect, and was about to retire to his sleepless couch, Penrose genially said to him, 'Victor, as soon as you have made that decision jump off the platform, for some one is going to take a shot at you sure.' The effect was not soothing. Yet he made the decision." "After that ruling there was no doubt as to the dominating power of the National Committee over the convention. The steam roller went smoothly, relentlessly, even proudly forward, crushing out all opposition." Bishop, pp. 111-112.

which tends more to advocate and defend the powers and rights of the States. But it is less popular than the district plan. It enables a shrewd politician in control of the party machinery of his State, and who is thereby able to manipulate the State convention of his party, to gain larger influence and power. A "snap judgment" may be more easily taken as against the wishes of the masses of the party. These have a better chance to exert their influence in smaller district conventions.

The delegates to the National Conventions are usually active party men, politicians in their respective districts who give a good deal of time and attention to politics. They are frequently able and astute managers, not office-seekers always, though often so, but men whose services to the party entitle them to some distinction and recognition. The delegates-at-large are usually men of State or national reputation, the party leaders of the State, the United States Senators, or men whose renown or power as speakers and managers will give the delegation weight and influence in the Convention.

Of former years much criticism arose on account of the presence in the National Convention of the party of the Administration, of Federal office-holders. It was alleged that these Federal officers exercised an undue influence in controlling political action and in thus retaining in power their party chieftain, the dispenser of their salaries and patronage. This was an obvious impropriety which public sentiment condemned. The party managers, in conformity with this sentiment, now discourage the appointment of Federal office-holders by the local conventions. Prior to the Republican National Convention of 1900, Hon. Charles Dick,

Character
of the
Delegates

Office-
Holders as
Delegates
to National
Conventions

secretary of the Republican National Committee, received a letter from the chairman of the Republican State Committee of Texas, inquiring whether it were true that Federal office-holders were not wanted as national delegates. Mr. Dick replied as follows:

While the National Committee does not assume to interfere in the selection of delegates, yet, in order to avoid adverse criticism, it is deemed advisable that so far as practicable delegations to the coming National Convention should be composed of men not holding Federal appointments. There are, of course, justifiable exceptions to this rule, but public sentiment dictates that Federal officials shall not be too prominently identified with the management of political conventions.¹

Politicians keep their hand on the public pulse and they know how the public feel.

Criticism has arisen also over the presence of United States Senators as delegates in the nominating presidential Conventions. As many as thirty have been known to sit as delegates in a single Convention.² These Senators are prominent party leaders and they exercise an influence in the Convention far out of proportion to their numbers. They are, therefore, very potent as President-makers, and this use of their power and position violates the original spirit and intent of the Constitution and raises the same objection that proved fatal to the old Congressional Caucus and its control of the presidential nomination. The same objection, of course, holds to the presence of members of the

¹ Hon. Charles Dick, Secretary, Republican National Committee, letter to E. H. R. Greene, Feb., 1900, *Chicago Record*, Feb. 17, 1900.

² Custom and public sentiment are opposed to this practice in some States.

House as delegates. The President is to be independent of Congressional control or creation. This is the *theory* of the Constitution; it has never been so in fact.

The question has been raised in late years, and it is especially urged upon the Republican organization, whether representation in a National Convention ought not to be in proportion to party strength within a State. At present the States are represented in the National Convention as they are represented in the National Congress,—in proportion to population. In a Republican National Convention a hopelessly Democratic State has the same voting strength as a safe Republican State of the same population. Georgia casts the same vote in nominating the Republican

Ought Representation in the National Conventions to be According to Party Strength? Is the President Representation Equitable?

candidates as Iowa, though Iowa has been quite sure to contribute to the election of the party candidate and Georgia is equally sure not to do so. The Republicans of Iowa cast, in 1920, 634,000 votes, while the Republicans of Georgia cast only 43,000 votes. For the party candidate in 1920 the Republicans of Ohio cast 1,182,000 votes, while the Republicans of South Carolina, Mississippi, and Louisiana together cast 52,500 votes. In a National Republican Convention, Ohio Republicans may cast only forty-six votes, while the Republicans from these three Southern States were accustomed to cast fifty-two. Why should 52,000 Republicans in one section have more power in their party Convention than a *million* of the party voters in another? It seems absurd. Why should not the voters of the party who are to be relied upon to elect the candidate be allowed to determine the party candidate and the party policy? Or, why should they not

have weight in doing this in proportion to their party numbers, in proportion to the votes which they cast for the party candidates? Party conventions within the States recognize the democratic representative principle. The different counties of the State are represented in the State conventions of the party in proportion to party numbers. Party vote in the counties, not population, is everywhere recognized as the true basis of representation. A county is allotted one delegate, say, for every two hundred votes (or major fraction thereof) cast for the party candidate at the head of the ticket at the last preceding election. No one questions the fairness of this representation. The late Populist party, with no traditions to bind it, recognized the new popular basis of representation in National Conventions. It allowed that each State should appoint two delegates-at-large, and then one for every two thousand votes cast in the State for the Populist electors in 1892. Thus in the Populist Convention of 1896, Texas, entitled in the old party

	conventions to thirty votes at that time,
Populist	had one hundred and three votes, while
Delegations	New York had but thirty-six votes. Kansas
Were Na-	had ninety-two votes, Connecticut but six.
tional, Not	From States where the Populist party was
Federal	strong the delegation was large. This would

tend to secure a nomination and a platform not by States but by the mass of the voters of the party. By this plan the party, not the States, makes the platform and the candidates.

Why should the same system not apply to the National Conventions of the old parties? This matter has come up within the Republican party at various times within the last thirty years. Representation

from the Southern States to National Conventions of the Republican party has been for a generation so disorderly and unfair as to become a public scandal. Representation has continued as it began in the origin of the convention system nearly 100 years ago: the convention was built on the plan of the Federal Government, to allow representation both of States and of population, without any reference to party strength within a State. There were no great inequities in this plan in our early history, since the two parties were fairly balanced in most States and the voting forces of each were fairly distributed in all the States. But since Reconstruction times the Republican party has had no standing in most of the Southern States. Federal office-holders and a few negroes have acted for it in the main, and in presidential years these have been directed and manipulated, chiefly by the party forces of the Administration, to secure the delegates to the Convention, with hardly a pretense of a real voting constituency being represented. Most unscrupulous methods have at times been employed in obtaining and controlling these delegates.¹ In 1912 a district in Louisiana representing *thirteen* Republican voters sent two delegates to the National Convention. These thirteen important citizens wielded as much power in the Convention as 25,000 or 30,000 Republicans in many Northern districts. It has been said that Mr. L. B. Moseley, of Jackson, Miss., a Federal office-holder, is the "Republican party" of that State.

A new basis of representation was presented to the Na-

¹ In 1888 Senator Sherman, of Ohio, one of the leading candidates for the presidential nomination, accused one of his opponents of "buying his niggers," who had been corraled in Sherman's interests. Mr. Hanna in McKinley's interest managed these Southern delegates in rather an unusual way. (See Croly's *Life of Hanna*, pp. 175-6 *seq.*)

tional Committee in 1883 but it was rejected. In the Convention of 1900 Senator Quay of Pennsylvania, who had been chairman of the National Committee and who was at the head of the Pennsylvania party machine, proposed a resolution that each State thereafter should have four delegates-at-large and one additional delegate for each ten thousand votes, or major fraction thereof, cast at the preceding presidential election.¹ This would have cut down six Southern States² from 108 delegates to 40, and would have increased six representative Northern States³ from 286 to 354. The proposal of Senator Quay was not pressed and nothing was done.⁴

The party managers were reluctant to make a change, owing to the seeming importance of maintaining the party organization in the Southern States. It is urged that the change would be a betrayal of faithful party adherents who have been making a long and losing fight against odds; that it would tend to encourage the party where it is strong, where it needs no special encouragement, and to discourage it where it is weak, where it most needs encouragement; that the Southern delegates represent not only those who vote

¹ Official Proceedings, Republican National Convention, Philadelphia, June 19-20, 1900.

² Fla., Ga., S. C., Ala., Miss., and La.

³ N. Y., Pa., O., Ind., Ills., Iowa.

⁴ Senator Thomas C. Platt says that Quay's motive in his proposal was to embarrass Mr. Hanna, McKinley's manager, who was seeking to hold the Southern delegations in hand. Quay disliked Hanna, and he was coöperating with Platt to force the nomination of Roosevelt (known to be disapproved by Hanna and McKinley) as a vice-presidential candidate. So Quay's reform of Southern representation may be looked upon as "building a back fire" in the political game, or as a strategic move to create consternation among the professional delegates from the South and to demoralize the Administration forces led by Hanna.—See *Reminiscences of T. C. Platt*.

but those whose votes are suppressed by fraud and violence or under the forms of law. It is further urged that the parties are not organized on *national* lines. They still recognize, in their organization and management, the interests and rights of the States as such, and their early customs and traditions, under which certain "rights" or expectations have grown up, are hard to change. Parties in their form or constitution, as we have indicated, are like the Government—they are partly Federal and partly National, and in their early organization they took on features corresponding to the Federal system.

The managers of all candidates and factions have worked the scheme as it is. But following the Progressive revolt and the debacle of 1912 a change was made for the Republican conventions. In the Convention of 1908 a new resolution had been brought forward for reform, proposing to allot delegates (after giving four to each State) on the basis of one for each ten thousand party votes cast. But it was not to the interest of those then in control to accept the change. In 1912 such a violent struggle arose over the control of the Convention and the seating of Southern delegates as led to the disruption of the party. Mr. Roosevelt and his supporters charged that it was only by arbitrary powers exercised by the National Committee and by high-handed methods in the control of delegates by Federal office-holders in the South, that he was deprived of the presidential nomination.¹ Following the election

¹ Nearly all the contests from the Southern States were decided in favor of the Taft claimants, and his nomination, which was effected by only a small majority, was supported by 191 delegates from the South. The loss of these delegates made the Roosevelt supporters angry and sore and it was one factor in leading to the organization of the new Progressive party.

of 1912, certain "Progressives" who remained with the Republican party—men like Senators Borah of Idaho, La Follette of Wisconsin, Cummins of Iowa, and Governor Hadley of Missouri—met in conference and publicly urged upon the National Committee to call a National Convention of the party for the purpose of bringing about certain reforms and especially the readjustment of representation and the subjection of the National Committee and the Convention to more popular control.¹ It is hardly likely that another

¹ The Republican National Committee refused (Dec. 16, 1913) to call a special convention for reorganization as demanded by the progressive members of the party. The committee retained control and later in its own way brought about the party reforms that it recognizes as being demanded by the public sentiment of the country. The Committee assumed the power to alter the basis of representation in National Conventions, although its law committee had reported that the Committee had no authority to make such a change. But the resolution of the Committee provided that the new basis of representation should not be operative in 1916 unless prior to that time it was ratified by Republican State conventions "in such number of States as are entitled to cast a majority of the votes in the present electoral college." The readjustment as proposed by the Committee reduces the total number of delegates in the convention to 983, leaving the South with 164 delegates, about one-sixth, instead of about one-third of the total membership as at present. There are to be four delegates-at-large from each State and one additional delegate-at-large for each Congressman-at-large, "one delegate from each Congressional district and one additional delegate for each district in which the vote either for Republican presidential electors in 1908 or for the Republican candidate for Congress in 1914 shall have been not less than 7500." (There are between 40,000 and 50,000 votes usually in a Congressional district and this new rule does not affect the representation from Northern districts. There will be two from each as usual. Districts casting fewer than 7500 votes for the party lose a delegate. See the Republican "call," pp. 297, 298).

There are other reforms to which the Committee pledged itself, involving the recognition of State laws as to the manner of choosing delegates, allowing the States with primaries to choose delegates in their own way; minimizing the number of contests for seats in the

Convention will ever meet constituted on the model of those of the past.

convention and the creation of new tribunals, if provided for by State law, to hear contesting delegations. Some method of terminating the tenure of committeemen immediately upon the election of their successors is a problem still confronting the committee. The committee instead of calling a convention which constitutes the sovereign legislative body of the party and in which the voters of the party may be fairly represented, has itself assumed authority to determine upon all these matters including the readjustment of State representation. But the changes proposed are to be ratified by the party conventions in the States, although in some States the party nominating convention is already abolished by law while in all the others the new plan will have to be merely accepted or rejected without opportunity for amendment or effective discussion. Thus the committee retains its power to decide and act for the party. It is doubtful whether this process will do anything toward allaying the distrust in the National Committee's management of party affairs.

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CHAPTER XV

THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF TO-DAY

AFTER the National Committee has appointed the time and place for the National Convention and issued the call, and the State and district committees have called conventions, and these have appointed delegates, the next step in the process of President-making is in the action of the National Convention.

The National Convention We come now to consider the Convention as we find it to-day. The National Convention is peculiar to America. No other country in the world offers a parallel to it. It is the outgrowth of the effort of a democratic society to attain to a complete representative scheme for a popular choice of its ruler.

The Convention as it is To-Day "No other country provides in its party life for any gatherings comparable in size, interest and representative character with our quadrennial National Conventions. The meetings of the National Liberal Federations in England alone approach the Republican and Democratic Conventions of the United States. But the English gatherings are not nearly so large and popular, nor do they possess any of the dramatic interest that grows out of the rivalry of leaders and candidates. . . . Train-loads of the most energetic members of the parties come from every direction. Large

The National Convention an Historic Spectacle

contingents from New England mingle with enthusiastic hundreds from the Pacific Coast. Scores of thousands of visitors, actually drawn from every State, Territory, and Congressional district in the Union, make the convention city for the time the political center and capital of the nation. The greatness and homogeneity of the country,—this is the object-lesson. Here is the real representative body of the nation,—seven or eight million voting citizens assembled in a representative folk-mote. The perfect acquiescence of these great conventions in the will of the majority exemplifies the strength of popular government. The conventions have come to be one of the finest and most valuable parts of our working political machinery. . . . It is not strange that the old party war-horses, scenting the battle from afar, cannot stay away from National Conventions. The student of history who finds himself a spectator in one of these mighty throngs,—so demonstrative and impetuous, yet so good-humored and so well disciplined in the school of democracy, can but think back along the course of Anglo-Saxon development, past the assemblage at Runnymede to the earlier days of folk-motes in the forests of our race's primitive home. Thus confidence in free government is strengthened, and faith in the saving sense of our English-speaking masses is revived.”¹

Mr. Bryce says of the Convention:

“A European is astonished to see nine hundred men prepare to transact the two most difficult pieces of business which an assembly can undertake,—the solemn consideration of their principles and the selection of the person they wish to place at the head of the nation, in the sight and hearing of twelve thousand other men and women.”²

¹ Albert Shaw in *American Review of Reviews*, July, 1892.

² Vol. ii., p. 193.

American politics does not offer the student and observer a more interesting and exciting spectacle than may be witnessed in the National Conventions. They have been the scenes of many dramatic and historic events, and their proceedings are well worthy of the student and the historian of politics. The Conventions of 1860 were especially notable. The fierceness of the party contest, the extreme tension of political feeling on the burning question of slavery in the Territories, the irreconcilable differences between the Northern and Southern wings of the Democratic party, and the probability that the threatened schism in the Democratic party on the slavery question could not be averted, and that the new Republican party, by the division of its opponents, might be able to secure control of the National Government,—this situation gave intense interest to the conventions of that year. At the Charleston Convention, where the Democracy of the nation were assembled in the persons of their representative delegates, a heated and passionate debate was had on the proposed platform of principles. This was a time when the platform, not the candidate, was the chief subject of controversy and division, except as the candidacy of Mr. Douglas embodied the platform. This is true also of the Democratic Convention of 1896. Such a situation generally indicates a lack of unity and harmony in the party, and may not give fair promise of party success; but it is usually indicative of a sound and healthy state of politics, because the party struggles for the approval of principles are indicative of deep and stirring political convictions among the people.¹

¹ Note the celebrated speeches of Conkling and Garfield in the Republican Convention of 1880, the "cross of gold" speech of Bryan in

The National Convention of To-Day 323

The preliminary arrangements for the Convention are entrusted to an executive committee of the National Committee. This committee of arrangements elects a sergeant-at-arms of the Convention, and to him is entrusted the duty of superintending the printing of tickets, the organization of a force to act as assistants, ushers, and pages to seat the people and to maintain order during the sessions of the Convention.

**The
National
Convention.
The Pre-
liminaries**

The National Convention is called to order by the Chairman of the National Committee. The proceedings are opened with prayer. The National Chairman then asks the Secretary of the Committee to read the call of the National Committee by which the assembly is convened.

**Call to
Order**

The Committee Chairman then immediately announces to the Convention the name of the temporary presiding officer, previously chosen by the National Committee. This nomination is usually accepted by the Convention without contest or division. If there is opposition, however, any delegate is entitled to place another name before the Convention and call for a vote; or some one may do so as the representative of the minority of the National Committee. In the Democratic Convention at Chicago

**Choice of
Temporary
Chairman**

the Democratic convention of 1896, and the historic speech of George William Curtis in the convention that nominated Lincoln in 1860 following the rejection of the resolution of Joshua R. Giddings which proposed to reassert the equality clause of the Declaration of Independence, and the dramatic contest in the Democratic convention of 1912, when Mr. Bryan offered his resolution pledging the Convention to oppose any candidate for President "who is the representative of or under any obligation to J. Pierpont Morgan, Thomas F. Ryan, August Belmont or any other member of the privilege hunting or favor seeking class." There have been many other stirring scenes in these historic conventions. See official Proceedings.

in 1896 the majority of the National Committee, being Gold men, nominated Senator David B. Hill of New York for temporary chairman. The majority of the delegates were opposed to this nomination, and it was desired by the Silver men, who were in the majority, to control the Convention from the outset. Consequently it was moved that the name of Senator Daniel of Virginia be substituted for that of Senator Hill, and the substitute motion was carried by a large majority. The Silver men were not willing to concede the temporary presiding officer to the Gold Democrats, not because that officer was important or might be influential in defeating the ultimate purpose of the majority of the Convention, but his selection would have had a moral influence in the country at large and would have indicated a willingness to yield and compromise on the issue. The Convention, it was held, must be in the hands of the undoubted friends of the cause.¹

After the temporary chairman is selected he addresses the Convention in a formal speech on public measures and on the political situation. Following his speech other prominent men are likely to be called out for brief speeches. These calls are informal and are not a part of the regular order of procedure. The chairman then announces that until a permanent organization is effected the Convention will be governed by the rules of the preceding Convention. After the speeches of the temporary chairman and others, some delegate may offer a resolution like the following:

¹ See also the contest in the Republican convention of 1884 when Mr. Lynch, a colored delegate from Mississippi, was elected temporary chairman over the man named by the National Committee. In this contest Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, then a young delegate from New York, supported Mr. Lynch in opposition to the committee's nominee.

“Resolved, That the roll-call of States and Territories be now called and that the chairman of each delegation announce the names of the persons selected to serve on the several committees as follows:

**Appoint-
ment of
Committees**

“Permanent Organization.

“Rules and Order of Business.

“Credentials.

“Resolutions.”

These committees, on a roll-call of States, are then named, not by the Chairman, but by the respective State delegations, one member from each State and Territory going on each committee. With the appointment of these committees the first session of the Convention is at an end.

During the recess of the Convention the committees are at work. The Committee on Credentials is hearing the evidence and pleas in the cases of contested seats, for this committee must report, at the next session if possible, as to what delegates are entitled to sit and vote in the Convention. Few conventions meet in which difficult contests do not come up for decision,—cases in which “politics” and sharp practice play important parts. The Committee on Resolutions has long and late sessions, perfecting the platform to be reported to the Convention. The Committee on Permanent Organization must report a list of permanent officers for the Convention, and the Committee on Rules a set of rules to guide the assembly.

**Recess
of the
Convention**

At the second session of the Convention the first business in regular order is the report of the Committee on Credentials. If this committee is not ready to report it will probably ask for leave to sit continu-

ously until it completes its labors. The Convention cannot proceed with its business until it is decided who has a right to take part in its proceedings, and after the permanent organization is effected the Convention may have to adjourn from time to time to await the conclusion of the Credentials Committee. But the delay of this committee in reporting does not postpone the permanent organization. This may be effected under the presidency of the temporary chairman, with the understanding that those may vote on questions relating to permanent organization who hold the certificates of membership in the Convention issued by the Secretary of the National Committee. Whether some of these are subsequently displaced by the report of the Credentials Committee may be determined later, but it must, however, be before the more important business of the Convention is transacted. If it be found necessary to grant the Credentials Committee more time the temporary chairman calls for the report of the Committee on Permanent Organization. This committee reports the name of a permanent chairman, a corps of secretaries, and a list of vice-presidents, one from each State. If these nominations are accepted by the Convention the permanent chairman is escorted to the platform and on taking the chair he also makes a speech to the Convention, congratulating the party, urging harmony and wisdom in the party councils, reviewing and defining the issues, in brief sounding a "keynote" for the approaching campaign. If, however, the Committee on Credentials be ready to report before the permanent organization is effected the Convention proceeds to act upon the report to determine its own membership. The Convention

**Second
Session**

**Permanent
Chairman**

usually accepts the majority report of its Committee on Credentials, but sometimes it substitutes a minority report instead. Sometimes, as between con-
testing delegations from a State, the Con-
vention decides to seat both delegations,
giving each delegate a half-vote. When this was done
by the Democratic Convention in Baltimore in 1848,
admitting both the Barnburners and the Hunkers,
allowing each faction to cast half the vote to which the
State was entitled, the Barnburners withdrew and the
Hunkers also refused to take part in the proceedings.¹
In 1860, at Charleston, the "Hards" from New York,
who had been elected by districts, were favorable to
the Southern program; the "Softs," elected by the
State Convention, were favorable to the Northern
Democracy and to the candidacy of Senator Douglas.
The Convention seated the "Softs" after a hard
contest.

**Contested
Seats**

Having been permanently organized and having
fixed the membership of the Convention, the assembly
then proceeds to consider the "platform"
reported by the Committee on Resolutions.

Platform

The platform is an address to the people, consisting
sometimes of various "planks," or a series of resolu-
tions, sometimes of an address without division into
numbered sections, containing the principles and
program of the party. It arraigns the opposing party
for its errors, criticises it for its course, joins issue with
it on prominent policies before the public, and gives
promise as to what the party will do if it is elected to
or retained in power. In the platform the managers
usually try to conciliate every section of conflicting
party opinion, and they frequently produce a document

¹ Stanwood, p. 233.

which treats with "prudent ambiguity" the questions on which there is division within the party. In 1856, the Democratic platform as to slavery in the Territories was ambiguous enough to hold together the Northern and Southern wings of the party; but in 1860, when men's convictions and purposes had become more pronounced and positive on that subject, no such platform could be made. The refusal to make a positive declaration on the subject caused a split in the party, and a positive declaration for either faction would also have caused a split. The same was true of the Democratic party on the money question in 1892 and 1896, and like conditions caused like results,—another schism. In 1892, the first paragraph in the "money" plank of the Democratic platform placated the Silver men, while the next paragraph reassured the Gold men. One part of the declaration was to do service in the West, the other in the East. But by 1896, when the money question had become the dominant controlling issue in the minds of an uncompromising majority of the party, it was not possible to reassert such an ambiguous and uncertain plank. When honest men with a strong purpose at heart are in control, the platform will not look both ways on a divisive issue.

The platform came along with the Convention system. The Democratic declarations of 1840 may be said to be the first that involved the three essential factors of a modern platform,—a statement of fundamental party principles, policies to be pursued under the pending circumstances, and pledges that these principles and policies will be carried out. Before this there were addresses adopted at public meetings, resolutions approved by ratification meetings, criticisms or defenses

**Early
Party
Platforms**

of the Administration published by party leaders, which were generally accepted as the basis of party action; but these were not platforms in our modern sense. In a general way only, not in the modern party sense as an expression adopted by elected representatives of the party, may the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 be called the platform upon which Jefferson and his party appealed to the country in opposition to the Federalist Administration of that day.¹

The National Conventions of the two parties are very similar to one another. But there are a few differences that are important, differences which are regarded as "fundamental and as revealing the underlying tendencies and principles of the two parties. These differences may be summed up in what are known as the two-thirds rule

**Two-Thirds
Rule and
Unit Rule**

¹ See p. 20.

In 1920, Mr. Hays, chairman of the Republican National Committee, invited leading men and women in the party to send in, several weeks before the meeting of the Convention, suggestions for the platform, so that a digest, or a tentative platform, might be more deliberately prepared. Usually before this some leader of the party, maybe some journalist who is an adept with the pen, is selected to draw up a platform. Frequently there have been hot contests in the committee on resolutions over pending issues and as to what position the party shall take upon them, and there is much wrestling of the spirit and of the flesh into the wee small hours of the night and sometimes all night or two nights. The committee gives hearings to contending groups, which, of necessity, must be very limited. At times only 15 or 30 minutes may be given to "a matter of vital importance to the welfare of the nation, perhaps a question of delicate foreign policy or one affecting the relation of classes and interests in the most significant fashion. Labor, business, agriculture, race, class, section, social and industrial interests of all types appear in a hasty procession for the perfunctory consideration of their claims upon the party. It is not a process that adds to the dignity of the national party system." Charles E. Merriam, *The American Party System* p. 231.

and the unit rule."¹ The two-thirds rule provides that no candidate shall be declared nominated unless he shall have received two-thirds of all the votes cast. This rule prevails only in the Democratic Convention. The two-thirds rule was adopted by the first Democratic Convention of 1832, a Convention called by the supporters of President Jackson for the purpose of nominating a candidate for the vice-presidency. It was used in 1836, but not in 1840, and it was revived in 1844 in order to defeat the nomination of Van Buren, and it has since been used by the Democratic party.

There is a connection between the two-thirds rule and the unit rule. If the two-thirds rule be abrogated while the unit rule prevails, a few of the large States, since their delegations may be nearly evenly divided, may, by enforcing the unit rule, secure a majority of the Convention for a candidate whom only a minority of the delegates really, favor. The two-thirds rule lessens the probability of this. These two rules have, therefore, been called "two parts of a single system, and that system the casting of State votes as a unit."²

The unit rule "is one which allows (but does not compel) the majority of a State delegation to cast the entire vote of a State." The whole vote of the State must be cast as the majority of the delegation decide. Like the two-thirds rule, this applies only in the Democratic Convention. The Republicans

¹ Carl Becker, "The Unit Rule in National Nominating Conventions," *American Historical Review*, Oct., 1899. See also Stanwood, "Election of 1844," and Niles, vol. lxvi., p. 211 ff., cited in Mr. Becker's article.

² Becker, *American Historical Review*, Oct., 1899. See also Dallinger, "Nominations for Elective Office in United States," *Harvard Historical Studies*, 1897.

do not use it. It is a rule that has been made by the practice of the State delegations, and the National Democratic Convention has never seen fit to interfere with this method of casting the State ballot if the State party convention has so directed. Then the National Convention will stand by this manner of voting.

The rule approved by the Democratic Convention of 1860 asserted:

“That in any State which has not provided or directed by its State Convention how its vote may be given, the Convention will recognize the right of each delegate to cast his individual vote.” If the States had instructed or requested the delegation to vote as a unit, the Convention ruled that it must do so, and the majority should decide. The authority of the State convention is recognized. The State delegation may decide to vote as a unit, but this may not be enforced by the Convention. But, if the State convention has so directed, the rule is enforced. “This recognizes the State convention as supreme; its instructions must be followed. If no instructions are given, the National Convention assumes authority and allows each individual delegate to cast his own vote.”¹

In 1872, it was decided that in voting for candidates for President and Vice-President the “chairman of each delegation shall rise in his place and name how the delegation votes, and his statement shall be considered the vote of such State.” This left to the Convention no means of discovering whether a delegation which votes as a unit is doing so under State instruction, or whether the majority, in the absence of instruction, may not be forcing a unit vote through its control

¹ Becker.

of the chairman. Until 1896, the statements of the chairman have been more or less arbitrarily received and all objections have been ruled out of order, and that, too, on all questions on which a State vote has been called for.¹

There was resistance to the unit rule in 1884, in order to defeat Mr. Cleveland by preventing the whole vote of New York from being cast for him. It was held that if "unit instructions were ever advisable it would be when they were made with reference to a specific policy or a particular candidate. It was the practice of broadly instructing delegations to vote as a unit *on all questions* as the majority dictated, which was especially objectionable." But to sustain the unit rule it was urged that it was the right of the State to say how its will should be expressed. "To deny the States this right is to strike a blow at their sovereignty. The Republican party may stand for centralized power, but the Democratic party should stand for the rights of the States."² The rule thus attacked out of hostility to Mr. Cleveland was sustained by a large vote in the Convention.

In 1896, the precedent was established of according a member of a State the right of challenging the vote as announced by the chairman of the delegation. The following from the proceedings of the Democratic Convention of 1896 will illustrate the latest practice in this rule. A vote was being taken on substituting the name of J. W. Daniel for that of David B. Hill for temporary chairman. This was the first issue joined between the Gold and Silver factions of the Convention. Iowa under the unit instruction from the State convention voted twenty-six yeas. Mr. Stackhouse objected

¹ Becker.

² Becker, *American Historical Review*, October, 1899, p. 70.

The Chair: The Secretary will call the roll of delegates from the State of Iowa.

Mr. Stone of Missouri: I understand the Democrats of the State of Iowa adopted the unit rule, and I desire to know whether the majority of the delegation cannot cast the entire vote of the State?

Present
Proceedings
under the
Unit Rule

The Chair: The Chair holds that the proposition as stated by the gentleman from Missouri is entirely correct. The Chair further holds that if a delegate from any given State challenges the accuracy or integrity of the vote of a State as announced, then the list of delegates from that State shall be called for the purpose of verifying the vote as reported.

Meanwhile the polling of the Iowa delegation had resulted in a vote of 19 to 7 for substituting Mr. Daniel for Mr. Hill.

The Chair: "The Iowa delegation having been instructed to vote as a unit, the vote of that State will be recorded as twenty-six votes yea" for Mr. Daniel. Seven delegates who wished to vote for Hill were made to vote for Daniel.¹

This seems to place the unit rule on the following footing: When the States are called to vote, the announcement of the chairman of a delegation is accepted as the correct vote of the delegation unless challenged by some member of it, in which case the delegation is polled in open convention. If the delegation is under unit instructions the vote of the State is then cast as a unit with the majority; if not, the vote stands as polled.²

The *unit rule* had no particular time for its origin.

¹ Official Proceedings, 1896, cited in Mr. Becker's article—see preceding footnote.

² Becker.

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It is a growth in practice. Republican Conventions allow each individual delegate to cast his vote as he chooses. The Democratic custom as to the unit rule has never been introduced into the Republican Conventions. The attempt was made to do so in 1876, but it was not successful. The Pennsylvania State Convention instructed its fifty-eight delegates, "upon all questions to be brought before or arising in the Convention, to cast the vote as a unit as a majority of the delegation may dictate." The fifty-eight votes were cast for Hartranft of Pennsylvania for President; but two of the delegates desired to vote for Mr. Blaine, and on their appeal their votes were so recorded, the Chair deciding that it was the right of "any and every member equally to vote his sentiments in this Convention." The decision of the Chair was sustained by the Convention. Pennsylvania, and other State delegations which had been instructed to vote with the majority as a unit, divided in the voting. Another effort to introduce unit voting into the Republican Convention was made in 1880. This was done, not because the rule was desirable, but because its use would serve the purposes of certain political leaders. Senator Conkling of New York, Senator Cameron of Pennsylvania, and Senator Logan of Illinois were leading the wing of the Republican party that proposed to nominate General Grant for a third term. These leaders set themselves to give their candidate an undivided vote from these large States. The seventy-two votes from New York, fifty-eight from Pennsylvania, and forty-four from Illinois, making one hundred and seventy-four votes in all, would win great prestige to

The Republican Convention Rejects the Unit Rule

Attempt to Renominate Grant by the Application of the Unit Rule

their cause. In addition to these States Arkansas, Alabama, and Texas were instructed to vote as a unit for General Grant. It was thought that such a nucleus would draw sufficient support from all other sources to win over the wavering ones who are always anxious to "get on the band-wagon" or "stand in" with the winner. There was grave danger, as politics goes, of this scheme's succeeding. Early State conventions were held in these large States and State instructions were given. Shrewd management and sharp practice were resorted to. In Illinois at the State convention the time-honored custom of allowing the delegation from each congressional district to name the delegates was abandoned, and a solid Grant delegation was appointed by a committee of the State convention under the control of the Grant leaders. Senator Cameron was Chairman of the National Committee. The bold plan was conceived by these leaders that, when Mr. Cameron called the Convention to order, he was to present a name for temporary chairman. If this were a Grant man he was to rule that all delegations under State instructions to vote as a unit must abide by their instructions. But if the temporary chairman named by the Committee were an anti-Grant man (as was likely to be the case, since a majority of the National Committee were opposed to Grant), then some one was to move to substitute the name of a Grant man in his stead, and in the ballot on that motion Senator Cameron was to enforce the unit rule on all the instructed States. In this way the Grant forces would secure the temporary presiding officer, who would enforce the unit rule in more important motions in the election of the permanent presiding officer, and finally, through the latter, in the balloting

for President. But there was a revolt within the party and the issue over the unit rule was fought out in the National Committee before it had a chance to appear in the Convention. The anti-Grant men, who were in a majority in the Committee, in order to block the scheme of Cameron and the Grant leaders, offered in the Committee a resolution as expressing the sense of the Committee and as a recommendation to the Convention to govern the temporary presiding officer, that each delegate should vote his own sentiments even against any unit rule or other instructions passed by a State convention. This right, it was asserted, had been "conceded without dissent in 1860 and 1868, and after full debate confirmed by the Convention of 1876. It has thus become a part of the law of the Republican party, and until reversed by a Convention itself must remain a governing principle."¹ Senator Cameron, in the sessions of the Committee, with unprecedented boldness and a flagrant disregard of the rights of the majority, refused to entertain and put this motion to the Committee, and he declared all out of order who appealed from his decision. His opponents then proceeded to take steps to displace him from the chairmanship. Cameron then yielded. A compromise was arranged. The unit rule was not enforced in the temporary organization of the Convention and Senator Cameron was allowed to retain the chairmanship. The Convention adopted a rule reported by General Garfield, chairman of the Committee on Rules, providing that in case any delegate objects to the announcement made by the chairman of his delegation, "the president of the Convention shall direct the roll of members of such delegation to be called and

¹ *American Historical Review*, October, 1899, p. 78.

the result recorded in accordance with the votes individually given." Individual voting was the result, and the instructed States, large and small, divided on the various ballots. The constant policy of the Republican party to allow each delegate to cast his vote as he pleases, not only as against unit voting, but even as against the instructions of his district convention, was again illustrated in 1888. The Indiana delegates, in both the State and district conventions, had been instructed to vote for General Harrison for President, but two of the delegates disregarded these instructions and cast their votes for General Gresham, without protest on the part of any. Neither the State nor the State delegation can enforce the unit rule against the uniform practice of the Convention. Thus we note the difference between the two *types of Convention*. The National Convention of the Democratic party has always allowed States to use the unit rule; the National Convention of the Republican party has never allowed them to use it.¹

One Convention defers to the State as a final authority; it recognizes an authority higher than itself. The other overrules the authority of the State; it stands as a national body and does not recognize an authority higher than itself. This is the difference between States' rights and Nationalism. The Democratic custom is a survival of one of the old traditions of the party,—a protest against centralization. The Republican custom comes from a disposition to make the central authority supreme.

The Republican Convention is National, the Democratic Convention is Federal

"I bid you consider long and well," said Mr. Fellowes of New York, in the Democratic Convention of 1884,

¹ Becker, *American Historical Review*, Oct., 1899, p. 80.

"before you strike down the sovereign power of our State expressed by the unanimous will of its delegates."

"I know," said Mr. Doolittle of Wisconsin, in the same Convention, "that in the Republican party—a party which believes that Congress and the Federal Government have every power which is not expressly denied, and that the States have hardly any rights left which the Federal Government is bound to respect—they can adopt in their Convention this idea that a State does not control its own delegation in a National Convention. Not so in the Convention of the great Democratic party. We stand, Mr. President, for the rights of the States."

"The principle which is involved in this controversy," said Mr. Atkins of Kansas, in the Republican Convention of 1876, "is whether the State of Pennsylvania shall make laws for this Convention; whether this Convention is supreme and shall make its own laws. We are supreme. We are original. We stand here representing the great Republican party of the United States, and neither Pennsylvania nor New York nor any State can come in here and bind us down with their caucus resolutions."¹

It is said that the Republican party in allowing each district to vote independently of the State is more democratic and stands more for localism. But the Republican practice does not recognize the district as a unit. It recognizes neither the State nor the district as such. It regards the Convention as representing the individual citizens of the nation. Two delegates are allotted to each district as a convenient geographical division of the country, but each delegate casts his own vote as he pleases, and district instructions cannot bind the two delegates to vote together nor can instruc-

¹ Becker, *American Historical Review*, see *ante*.

tions bind them to vote contrary to their individual judgments. This makes them national representatives, not merely district delegates.¹ It will be noted by those acquainted with American history that these tendencies, toward centralization and decentralization respectively, are in harmony with the history and purposes of the two parties.

As to instructions in a Convention, a delegate will generally feel inclined to vote according to the resolutions of the State or district convention appointing him. But he is not bound to do so.

Instructions

Repeatedly in the Republican Conventions delegates have disregarded instructions and have been sustained by the Convention in their right to do so. State and district conventions may instruct their delegates to support the candidacy of a "favorite son" of the State, and such instructions are usually observed, though not always. After the delegates have been chosen and instructed, something may come to light concerning the proposed nominee, or policy, which may make a violation of instructions desirable, if not necessary.

Van Buren's letter in opposition to Texas annexation on April 27, 1844, caused a meeting in Virginia to change instructions; other delegates assumed that their constituents would not regard the instructions as binding; others resigned rather than carry out such instructions. Under such circumstances it may be the duty of delegates to disobey their instructions. In the same Democratic Convention of 1844, the delegates from New York were instructed for Van Buren who were not at heart for him. They voted for a two-thirds

**Party In-
structions
in 1844**

¹ Case of Judge Field, Indiana, 1888; Proceedings of National Republican Convention.

rule, which was sure to secure his defeat, and then nominally carried out their instructions by voting for Van Buren on the first ballot. You cannot bind men that have no heart for the cause, men that are not trustworthy and true, and it is useless to bind men that are. However, for disregarding his instructions, which, presumably, would be the voice of his constituents, the delegate should show good reasons. He would be condemned, perhaps politically ostracized, as for violating a trust, if he misrepresented and betrayed the people in whose place he stands.¹

The "ironclad pledge" was applied to the members of the National Republican Convention in 1880 by a resolution which asserted that every member of the Convention was "in honor bound to support its nominee, whoever that nominee may be, and that no man should hold his seat here who is not ready to so agree." This was an attempt to bind the action of the delegates after the Convention, or to prevent men of independent minds from participating in the party action. Such a pledge will not bind the unscrupulous, and men of honor do not need it.

After the Convention has adopted rules and has determined its membership by accepting the report of its Committee on Credentials, and after it has adopted a platform, it proceeds to nominate candidates for President and Vice-President. Interest centers in the presidential nomination. So much is this true, except when a party President is to be renominated, that the vice-presidency receives but little consideration. Geographical considerations may influence

**The
Ironclad
Pledge**

**The Vice-
Presidency
is but
Little
Considered**

¹ See the case of Mr. Bryan at Baltimore in 1912, p. 197.

the choice of the Vice-President, or the victorious wing of the party may confer the nomination on a leader of their defeated opponents as a means of soothing disappointments and conciliating and uniting all elements for the support of the presidential nominee. It often happens that entirely unknown men are named for Vice-President.¹ Of course, this is a dangerous custom, for the Vice-President should be a man as well equipped for the first place as the one who heads the ticket.

In the contest for the presidential nomination certain classes of candidates are recognized. The "favorite" is one of the prominent, leading candidates, ^{The} who has been before the public for some time, "Favorite" for whom great preliminary efforts have been made, who, as the first choice of a large number from all parts of the country, and the second choice of many others, has such support as to lead to the expectation that he may be nominated. The "favorite son" is a leader of prominence and influence in his State, who, however, has not been a figure of ^{The "Favor-} ^{ite Son "} national prominence in politics. His support comes chiefly from his home State, not generally from the country at large. His State delegates are probably instructed for him and are working for his nomination. The hope of his nomination is based partly on his recognized fitness, partly on his geographical location, largely on the inability of the Convention to agree upon one of the "favorites" or on the probability that the "favorites" will kill one another off. The strife, the personal rivalries, the bitterness and rancor in the Convention are likely to arise among the "favorites";

¹ See the Author's *The American Republic and Its Government*, p. 137 sqq.

the "favorite sons," or their managers, seek to avoid exciting personal antagonisms and animosities.

The "dark horse" is the candidate who comes into the running after the Convention has pretty well spent its energies in attempting to choose between the "favorites" and the "favorite sons."

The "Dark Horse" The candidacy of the "dark horse" may have been thoroughly planned, the runner may be well groomed by astute managers before his name is mentioned in the Convention, or before he is seriously voted for there. The nomination of a "dark horse" is not likely to be the result of a spontaneous movement in the Convention, without pre-convention work or plan, though it may be so. A man who is recognized as a fit candidate, but who has not been in the fight for the nomination, whom the Convention and the country are not thinking of as the probable nominee, who has not been identified with either contending faction in the party, who is colorless and unobjectionable,—such a man is an eligible "dark horse." A "dark horse" may be mentioned as such publicly, but it is understood that he is not a candidate, and if there are managers who intend to bring in his name at the opportune time, any intention of a candidacy on his part will be likely to be denied. The struggle in the Convention is not only to nominate a man,—it is equally for the purpose of defeating a certain man, and it often occurs that the struggle resolves itself into "the field against the 'favorite.'" If an objectionable "favorite" cannot be defeated by another "favorite," as Grant could not be beaten by Blaine in the Republican Convention of 1880, the field might be united in opposition to the leading "favorite" by the candidacy of a "dark horse," as was done in the nomination of Garfield in that year.

The National Convention of To-Day 343

The candidates' names are placed before the Convention on a roll-call of the States. A candidate from one State may have his name placed before the Convention by another State, and this may be seconded by several States in succession. The Convention votes by States, alphabetically, and if the vote as announced by the chairman of the delegation is challenged, the delegation is polled in open Convention.

Method of
Voting in
Convention

When there are several candidates before the Convention and the supporters of the various candidates are determined and well organized, the balloting may continue for a number of days. When the weaker factions begin to change their votes for one of the stronger candidates, the "break" comes. Instructions and pledges are assumed to have been fulfilled, and the delegates break away from candidates they have so far supported. Decisive balloting is likely to result. Delegates, as a rule, have a fondness for the "band-wagon,"—that is, they wish to stand in favor with the successful candidate and his managers, and to be identified with the vanguard of victory. Consequently, at a "break" in the balloting, if a leading candidate seems destined to win there may be a rush of delegates to his support, and we have the "stampede."

The
"Break"

"The defeat becomes a rout. Battalion after battalion goes over to the victors, while the vanquished, ashamed of their candidate, try to conceal themselves by throwing away their colors and joining in the cheers that acclaim the conqueror. To stampede a convention is the steadily contemplated aim of every manager who knows he cannot win on the first ballot. He enjoys it as the most dramatic form of victory, he

The
"Stampede"

values it because it evokes an enthusiasm whose echo reverberates all over the Union."¹

Adjournment is the only means of resisting a stampede, and if that fails, the managers of the field against the favorite see that the battle is lost, and the successful candidate goes in with votes to spare and "with a hurricane of cheering." A motion is offered to make the nomination unanimous, and this is supported by the defeated factions with as much grace as possible, and all pledge loyalty and support to the chosen chieftain. The Convention, perhaps after recess, proceeds after the same fashion to nominate a candidate for Vice-President, and the work is done. After appointing the Convention chairman and a committee officially to inform the candidates of their nomination the Convention adjourns *sine die*.

Then the party leaders and delegates, the marching clubs and the throngs of tired visitors depart for their homes, the intense excitement subsides, the country settles down for the breathing space of a few weeks' rest, while the party forces, the candidates and their special champions prepare their plans for the coming campaign.

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CHAPTER XVI

THE CONDUCT OF THE CAMPAIGN

**Nomina-
tion of
Presidential
Electors
by State
Conventions** BEFORE the campaign begins there is another piece of party work for the machine. This is the nomination by the State conventions of the respective party candidates for presidential electors. These nominations may be made either before or after the National Convention. One elector is nominated for each Congressional district in the State and two for the State-at-large. It is not required that they be residents of the districts for which they are named. Electors are State officers, and they are usually nominated by the State convention, though a separate district convention, or the delegates from the district to the State convention, may choose the district elector.¹ This list of candidates for presidential electors for a State is called the "electoral ticket." These are the men whom the voters elect to choose the President and Vice-President but, of course, the voters or the party convention decide whom they shall select.

When the Convention has adjourned *sine die*, it goes out of existence and the temporary part of the party

¹ For the character of the electors, the methods of their election, and their qualifications, see *The American Republic and Its Government*, p. 116 *sqq.*

machinery has done its work. The committee machinery, the permanent part of the organization, then proceeds to conduct the campaign. The "campaign" is the term applied to the party struggle for supremacy during the few months immediately preceding the presidential election in November. In a way, the campaign has been conducted with more or less energy during the whole of the preceding four years. The party in power has been making a record for itself by its administration, while the Congressional Committee—a member from each State—is almost constantly distributing campaign literature.¹ This Congressional material, sent out under the frank of the members of Congress, serves to keep the voters informed on the issues, and these speeches are often delivered in Congress for no other purpose than for popular distribution—for the voters in "Buncombe."² But in the regular campaign, which generally occupies three months before the election, a great network of committees is set into operation. Besides the National Committee and its executive committee, which is known as the "campaign committee," there is a State committee in

The Cam-
paign

Congres-
sional
Campaign
Literature

The Net-
work of
Committees

¹ See p. 114.

² *Buncombe*, now "bunk" for short, was originally speech-making for one's constituents, or to gain public applause. The phrase *to speak for buncombe*, that is for mere show or popularity, originated near the close of a debate on the famous Missouri question in 1820. It was then used by Felix Walker, a naïve old mountaineer in whose district was the county of Buncombe in North Carolina. The old man rose to speak while the House was impatiently calling for the "Question," and several members gathered around him begging him to desist. He persevered, however, for a while declaring that the people of his district expected it and he was bound to "make a speech for Buncombe." Webster's Dictionary.

every State, a committee in every county, city, township, ward, and precinct. Each committee attends to its own bailiwick, but as they all wish to work in harmony and not at cross-purposes they must work under

some general directing head. This is the executive committee of the National Committee, which has general charge of the campaign. This committee is made up after

consultation with the candidates for President and Vice-President and with other interested and wise leaders of the party. At the head of this committee is the Chairman of the National Committee, who in politics has become an important national figure. The Chairman is

the campaign manager; he raises the party funds, or provides agencies for doing so, helps to direct the appointment of delegates, and makes certain party pledges, and if his party candidate be successful he may be, to an

extent, the dispenser of party patronage. The national Chairman is likely to become a confidential adviser and a close counselor with the President, especially on matters where party interests are involved. He is therefore likely to be much sought after by those who may be seeking appointments after the election; these look to him as the dispenser of party patronage. During the campaign he is made the target of opposition and abuse by his opponents, in press and speech, before the public. The national Chairman is the captain of the forces, the commander-in-chief, the head master of the machine, and he is expected to be a political manager of the first class, energetic and forceful, skillful and astute. To be the general head and director of the campaign, the Chairman must understand the political situation in all parts of the country, must be

in close touch with popular feeling, and he must have a faculty for detail and a capacity for unlimited work. His executive committee—his lieutenants or staff officers—are also astute politicians. These men are put in charge and made responsible for certain divisions of the work. The Secretary of the Committee, while he is subordinate in determining the policy of the Committee, is one of the most effective factors in the campaign. The Chairman may visit different parts of the country, and may make campaign speeches; but the Secretary is the constant executive worker and director at headquarters, and no man in the country is more familiar with the details of actual campaign work than he. He is an able business manager, he occupies a position of first-rate importance, and he probably knows more of the actual forces in practical politics than any other man in the country.

The Secretary of the Committee

The National Committee is composed of our national party rulers and its importance should be appreciated.

In 1848, the Democratic Convention at Baltimore "directed the appointment of a central committee of one member from each State to take general charge of the canvass and of the party's interests. This was the first National Committee ever organized."¹ At present the Committee of each party consists of fifty-one members—one from each State and Territory and one from the District of Columbia. The Chairman and Secretary of the National Committee need not be members of the Committee. The committeemen are appointed at the preceding National Con-

Origin and Organization of the National Committee

¹ Stanwood's *History of the Presidency*, p. 232.

vention, having been previously selected by the State delegations to that Convention. Just before nominating candidates in the National Convention the roll of

the Convention is called by States for the nomination of committeemen from each State and Territory. As the roll is called, the chairman of each State or Territorial delegation arises in turn and names the committeeman from his State, the delegation, or a majority of it, having previously agreed upon a man. The term of office is four years, a member of the Committee, unless removed for cause, continuing to serve until the adjournment of the next National Convention.

Such has been the custom for years, but now under the rising ride of progressive democracy a new custom has begun. The parties in some States are electing their National Committeemen in a party primary at the same time the delegates to the Convention are elected. The people are demanding a more direct control of their party machinery. The machine politicians have been the creatures of coteries, cliques, and bargains. Some of these have obtained places on the National Committee, and they have not been either representative of the people or responsive to their will, but have rather used their place and power to circumvent the popular desire. The Democratic National Convention in Baltimore in July, 1912, through Mr. Bryan's influence, declared that the "committeemen who are hereafter to constitute the membership of the Democratic National Committee and whose election is not provided for by law shall be chosen in each State at primary elections and the service and authority of committeemen, however chosen, shall begin immediately upon the

receipt of their credentials respectively." The latter provision is for the purpose of preventing an old committee, chosen four years before, from exercising influence or control over an approaching Convention. New committeemen for the Republican party chosen in the States just prior to the Convention of 1912 were not allowed to act on the Committee until *after* the Convention was over.

In certain contingencies the State convention or State committee of the party may select the National Committeeman from that State, subject to the approval of the National Committee.

The Committee chooses its Chairman, who, as the official head of the party, is, as we have said, one of the most important political factors in the nation. It is not always that a National Committee Chairman stands so close to the President as Mr. Hanna did to Mr. McKinley, or that he so largely controls presidential patronage as did Mr. Hanna, but this tendency in party politics is noticeable. The Chairman of the defeated party is also deferred to as the representative and spokesman of his party; what he does, says, or is, the party is more or less held responsible for, and party policies are always submitted to his judgment. Altogether the party Committee and its Chairman are prominent, perhaps dominant, figures in national politics.¹

Political
Importance
of the
Chairman

Although the Federal system and the doctrine of States' rights are recognized in these party organizations, especially by the Democratic party, yet the National Committees are given important central

¹ See "The New Powers of the National Committee," Rollo Ogden, *Atlantic Monthly*, Jan., 1902.

supervising powers. The Committee in the final resort must be the judge of its own membership. It is not likely to override the action of the State delegation or

State convention or primary, by refusing to
Powers of seat a member selected by these agencies;
the National yet the National Committee must have the
Committee power to protect the party from enemies within its councils, otherwise local conditions might cause men to be seated in the executive councils who were traitors to the platforms and candidates approved by the party. Cases arose in 1896 testing this. Certain members of the National Democratic Committee were betraying the interests of the party, not wishing to have the Bryan Democracy successful in the campaign. The National Committee declared their places vacant; the facts were placed before the Democratic authorities of the States involved and they were asked to name "loyal Democrats" to fill the vacancies. In Massachusetts and Pennsylvania Mr. Cochrane and Mr. Harrity, who were out of sympathy with the purposes of the party in that campaign, were displaced by subsequent State conventions within their States. Mr. J. M. Guffey for Pennsylvania and Mr. George Fred Williams from Massachusetts were recommended by the State conventions to the National Committee. Before the National Committee Mr. Harrity contested the right and power of the State convention to remove him. A ballot was taken on this question and the National Committee upheld the right of the State convention to declare the membership on the National Committee for that State vacant, and to recommend a successor. In this case Mr. Guffey was seated.¹

¹ Letter to the Author from C. A. Walsh, Secretary of the Democratic National Committee, March 3, 1900.

This does not mean that the State convention or the State committee is recognized as having the right to fill any vacancy that may occur in the National Committee. The recommendation of the Pennsylvania Democrats was approved in this instance, and, except for good cause, all such recommendations are likely to be approved; but the National Committee reserves the final right of deciding in such cases,—of accepting or rejecting nominations.

It should be understood, of course, that there is no written constitution for the parties regulating these matters. Contests against a member's right to sit on the Committee are not frequent and the Committee will seek to avoid them for the sake of party harmony. Tradition, custom, precedent, are all-powerful in guiding the action of the party authorities. A century of politics has brought certain observances and political traditions. When new conditions arise new decisions have to be made. But there are unwritten laws for the party as firmly fixed as if they were a part of the Constitution. They exist by the consent of the governed and are fixed by usage.

Every experienced political manager knows that the first essential to the successful conduct of a campaign is *organization*. The next important essential, it has been said, is *organization*; a third is *organization*. The organization must be thorough and complete. The National Committee, the State committees, the county committees the township committees, and the appointed party agents and workers in the city precincts and wards, must all be in close articulation and coöperation with one another.

Importance
of Organi-
zation

For working purposes during the campaign the

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National Committee is subdivided. Its most important subdivisions are the executive com-

mittee and the finance committee. It has Subdivisions of the National Committee also:

Committee (1) A Committee in charge of the Bureau of Speakers.

(2) A Committee in charge of Literary and Press Matters.

(3) A Committee in charge of Distribution of Public Documents.

Another party National Committee deserves notice in this connection. This is the Congressional Campaign Committee. This committee is independent of

the National Committee and of the National

Congressional Convention, though it always works in co-operation with these. It is appointed by the Congressional caucus of the party—the

party members of Congress.¹ While the National Committee and the local committees are attending to the business of carrying the States necessary to elect the President, the Congressional Committee gives its special attention to seeing that the party carry a majority of the next Congress; that particular attention is given to certain doubtful districts, and that money and speakers are sent to the strategic points. This committee is an adjunct to the regular party organization.²

¹ The Republican Congressional Committee, appointed by the party Senators and Representatives in caucus, consists of a member from each State. The Democratic committee is chosen by separate caucuses of Senate and House members. The Senators have nine members on the committee, and each State and Territory represented by a Democrat has one.

² For the origin of this committee see p. 114.

In connection with the National State, and Congressional committees, notice should be taken of the many local committees, all of which go to make up the permanent part of the party organization.

There are the Congressional district committee and the county central committee.

Local
Party
Committees

There is no uniform system for constituting these committees throughout the States, but the Congressional district committee may be composed of the chairmen of the county central committees of the several counties within the district, and the chairmen of the district committees may in their turn be *ex-officio* members of the State central committees.¹ When two or more counties are joined together for the purpose of electing a State Senator or Representative to the State legislature, there may be a joint committee for these counties. The respective county chairmen may serve as such a committee. In some States there may be committees, or committeemen, for each township, school district, ward, or voting precinct. Party agents, or committeemen, in the smaller districts report to and coöperate with committees acting for larger areas. Within the State central committee, as in the National Committee, a smaller executive committee wields most of the power and does most of the actual work during a party campaign. These committees have charge of the party business. They are expected to raise money, employ speakers, distribute literature, call caucuses and meetings of party workers, organize and direct public meetings, see that their party voters are instructed as to their

Committee
Work

¹ For a detailed description of the party machinery and committees in the States consult Professor Macy's *Party Organization and Machinery*.

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legal resident requirements, look after the naturalization of immigrants and the registration of voters, call the regular local nominating conventions, or primary elections, and arrange for these; keep in correspondence with and carry out the instructions of the superior committees; arrange for the election by appointing their party representatives as clerks and judges of elections; and to attend to whatever else may arise in the conduct of the campaign.

All this indicates the extent and completeness of the party organization. The organization is so complete and certain that the National Committee and its bureau of information may be in direct touch and communication with any city ward, or with any rural district of the remotest township in any county of any State in the Union.

The part played by the candidate in the campaign is important. His letter of acceptance and his speech

made in response to the official notification of his nomination may be the opening notes of the campaign. The notification speech has been made in late years the occasion of a great party rally and demonstration. The formal letter will follow some weeks after the speech at notification. These two contributions of the candidate are important

party documents for the campaign. In his letter he formally accepts the nomination, endorses the principles of the platform, and endeavors to put his party's position in as strong a light as possible before the voters. The candidate seldom ventures to dissent from the party platform; but he may, in his speech or letter, emphasize one of the issues and endeavor to make it "paramount" in his candidacy; and by his record and opinions on public questions he may, in a measure, be

The Candidate in the Campaign.
Letter of Acceptance and Notification Speech

something more or less than his party. Mr. Cleveland, unlike his party platform in 1892, represented no uncertain position on the silver question, while Mr. Bryan was in thorough accord with his platform in 1896. In a measure, Mr. Cleveland, in his candidacy and in his letter of acceptance, virtually modified the platform of his party. This practice would tend to reduce the importance of the platform and to give the candidate's personal record and his letter of acceptance an equal or greater weight with the voters in their judgment of the party's intentions. The platform—the official creed of the party—has come to be looked upon as a mere play at politics, as a declaration “to get in on, not to stand on.”¹ Normally the country should expect the candidate and the platform to be in harmony, but they are not always so. Sometimes, when a candidate is “stronger than his party,” he may force a declaration in harmony with his views from convention managers who would otherwise dodge or straddle. Douglas declared that he would refuse a nomination on a platform acquiescing in Southern demands on slavery in 1860, and Mr. Bryan's views determined his party platform in 1896, 1900 and 1908. In 1852, the Whigs endorsed the Fugitive Slave Law and at the same time nominated a military hero thought to be acceptable to anti-slavery Whigs. Some of the Northern Whigs said that they “would vote for the candidate but spit on the platform.” The candidate and the platform should not leave the voter “in a strait betwixt two,” but in case he is so left, the voter will be inclined to accept the candidate and disregard the platform. The voters will be fooled who trust to platforms and not to men.

¹ See Ford's *Rise of American Politics*, chap. xvi., and Bradford's *Popular Government*, chapter on “The Spirit of Party,” p. 507.

However, no worthy candidate will seek to get in on a platform intended to mislead and deceive. Mr. Bryan has denounced such a practice as "the embezzlement of office."

All this thorough organization and the vast amount of work the committees do will indicate what is involved in a campaign of education. It may not all be education in the right direction, but it involves reaching by some influence the heart and will of the whole nation. The campaign is a vast school of instruction, and people heed instruction from platform and press who take but little interest in public discussion at other times. It would not be difficult to show that the benefits of such a campaign outweigh its evils.

The aims of this permanent working organization have been named as follows ¹:

1. *Union*.—The organization strives to keep the party together to prevent schism and dissension. The organizing managers, therefore, will strive to suppress discussion within the party on a divisive question, to urge the duty of party loyalty, and to hold in line the traditional supporters of the party. The National Committee, through its agents, often intervenes in a State to allay strife and dissension; and the State committees may bring similar party pressure to bear within a county where factions are rending the party and endangering success. And many party voters who have protested vigorously, during the early months of the campaign, that they "would never, no, never," support the party again under the course it is pursuing, have been "whipped into line" by the various tactics of the campaign managers.

¹ Bryce, *American Common-wealth*.

2. *Recruiting*.—To bring in new voters, to look after the immigrants, the first voters, and the newcomers in a community. It is expected that the party attitude of every voter in every precinct shall be reported to general headquarters.

3. *Enthusiasm*.—To quicken the indifferent, to combat general apathy, to arouse the voters to sympathy and action. Sometimes the managers pursue the policy of a “still hunt,” or conduct a “gum-shoe” campaign. That is, they quietly and privately interview as many voters as possible personally, distributing party speeches and influencing the voters by quiet tactics. Voting precincts are generally so subdivided that there will be a limited number of voters to a precinct, not to exceed, say, two hundred and fifty. The party faith and loyalty of the majority of these will be well known. They need no attention from the party workers. From their ranks the party workers are drawn. Probably thirty or forty voters of the precinct are to be worked upon. Some can be bought; some need literature, or persuasion, or a friendly interview with the right man. If there are “floaters” they are probably “divided into blocks of five,” and each block placed in charge of some “trusty man.” The party committeeman from the precinct secures a private meeting of eight or ten reliable party workers, the doubtful voters are canvassed, and each party worker is given a list of names of four or five voters, and he is made responsible for bringing every available effective influence upon his men to see that they vote right. Of course, all this is done without any suggestion of it to the community. This kind of party work is carried on in any kind of campaign, whether it be a “still-hunt” campaign or one of excite-

The “Still
Hunt”

ment and noise. The party managers know that the quiet, personal work is the most effective. The "still-hunt" policy is apt to be pursued in a community by the party in the minority with the design of preventing the party lines from being closely drawn, or party passions and prejudices being greatly aroused and inflamed. By this method voters of the majority party in the community are induced to vote for candidates of the

minority party for local offices, and it is hoped that many indifferent voters of the majority will not be sufficiently aroused to go to the polls to vote. On the other hand, the other method of campaign, called the "whoopla" or "hurrah" campaign, has for its purpose the arousing of the rank and file from their indifference and lethargy, the stirring of their party spirit, and the drawing of party lines. The managers seek to arouse the party enthusiasm by means of meetings, speeches, bands, parades, rallies, barbecues, and grand demonstrations, all designed to excite the voter to shout with party loyalty and to vote with his party crowd.

The "Hurrah" Campaign hoped that many indifferent voters of the majority will not be sufficiently aroused to go to the polls to vote. On the other hand, the other method of campaign, called the "whoopla" or "hurrah" campaign, has for its purpose the arousing of the rank and file from their indifference and lethargy, the stirring of their party spirit, and the drawing of party lines. The managers seek to arouse the party enthusiasm by means of meetings, speeches, bands, parades, rallies, barbecues, and grand demonstrations, all designed to excite the voter to shout with party loyalty and to vote with his party crowd.

4. *Instruction.*—This is a fourth aim of the party organization. Voters must be instructed in the knowledge of the political issues; they must be given information about their leaders, and about the wrongs of their opponents.

All of these things require a vast amount of campaign work. The various sub-committees appointed by the National Executive Committee all have their allotted work.

The Committee in charge of the bureau of speakers will appoint men to speak in different parts of the country, usually directing men of national reputation

to speak in those States which are considered most doubtful.

The committee in charge of literary and press matter and the committee on distribution of documents determine upon the character of the documents that are to be distributed among the voters. The preparation of party literature is carried on throughout the campaign. Thousands of leaflets, pamphlets, and documents are compiled, setting forth facts, figures, and arguments for the party. A "Campaign Text-Book" is distributed, an arsenal of facts and arguments especially for the use of party speakers,—the "spell-binders," as they are called in the campaign slang. This literature is not mailed directly to individuals from the literary bureau, though it may be had on application, but it is shipped in bulk by the carloads, to the chairmen of the State and local committees, who attend to its distribution among those with whom it will do the most good. In 1896, the cost of this part of the work for one of the parties was estimated at over \$700,000, while in 1900 it was nearer the million-dollar mark.

**Campaign
Literature**

In addition to public speaking and the dissemination of documents, the party committees have come in later years to make a larger use of the party press, by the insertion of news articles and editorials in the weekly and daily papers of the country. This is the most effective form of campaigning, and the machinery for it is elaborate and ingenious. Good campaign articles are made up for the newspapers. Stereotyped matter is sent to thousands of papers, "patent insides" are furnished to the country press, while to metropolitan papers proof-slips are sent to be used at the editors' discretion.

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"All loyal party papers especially the papers seeking the party patronage and the local country printing, print this matter. Many country papers have no other political discussion than that furnished from political headquarters. Nearly one thousand papers print these furnished articles regularly. No matter what the subject of the article, the net result is the earnest exhortation to vote the party ticket. The press bureaus of the parties furnish Independent papers articles for a "Daily Debate," contributed by able advocates on either side. This demand on the party managers is new to politics and has made necessary an increase in the literary force. But both parties welcome this means of putting the party creed before the voters whose minds are not fully made up."¹

In this instruction of voters by literature, sectional race, and religious prejudices are always considered. Different matter will be sent to Colorado, Wyoming, and California than that sent to Philadelphia, New York, or Boston. There are special messages for negroes, for Germans, for the Irish, and the Scandinavians; and the religious papers are supplied with sermons turning on political questions. Cartoons and large placards are published and sent broadcast throughout the land.

Public speaking is an important means employed for instruction and enthusiasm. Before the campaign opens a complete list is made up of the best available party speakers. Many of these are paid salaries as well as their expenses. Among these are the ordinary "schoolhouse, or cart-tail spell-binder," as well as the great oratorical stars, the distinguished United States Senators, or the party

¹ Willis J. Abbott, *American Review of Reviews*, Nov., 1900, "The Management of the Democratic Campaign."

presidential and vice presidential candidates as in nearly all recent campaigns. In 1900, over six hundred party orators were managed from the Chicago headquarters of the Democratic party. The Committee managers must lay out the route for these speakers, avoid conflicts and seek in every way to use the men where they will do the most good. Speakers to city audiences are sent forth in all languages. In the ten days immediately preceding the election of 1900 it is estimated that as many as seven thousand Republican speeches were made every week-day night. Accompanying these are parades and rallies, bands and barbecues, to arouse public excitement and party spirit. With all this "arousement" of the party forces, the shrewd managers provide for calling the tried and true party workers together for a conference, for a "heart to heart" talk. It is in these conferences that the smooth and unseen hand of the manager lays out campaign work for the "boys" that cannot well endure the light of day.

During all this campaign work the party chairman or manager must decide important party matters. He must review the reports from the field and decide what States may be considered as safe and what States need more effort and energy. The National Campaign Committee receives almost daily reports from the State committees. In every State local committees are at work so that not an inch of ground is left uncovered. Local committees report to the State committees, which in turn report to the campaign committee, so that the chairman, the commander-in-chief, is kept constantly in touch with the conditions all over the country from week to week. In the doubtful States—the real fighting-ground—a systematic, virtually house-

to-house canvass is made, so that in such a State as Indiana, for instance, every voter will have a chance to hear the party argument and feel the party influence, and the campaign committee may be able to tell within a very few thousand votes how the State will throw its more than a million votes.

The detailed and laborious work of the campaign, and the thoroughness with which the network of committees operates, may be seen from a few items taken from the careful instructions sent out by a State committee of one of the parties. The party agents throughout the State were instructed as follows:

1. Ascertain the general condition of the organization.
2. Ascertain if a poll of the county has been secured.
3. If not, how soon will a poll be completed?
4. If partially completed, cause of failure to complete.
5. Ascertain the townships that have not been completed.
6. Ascertain if the chairman has visited the precinct committeeman and urged him to complete the work.
7. Ascertain if the poll is made by calling on each voter, or is written up from general knowledge of each voter's politics.
8. If the poll is made without calling on each voter and finding out how he will vote, how can they expect to have a reliable poll?
9. Ascertain if they are looking after voters classified as doubtful, and how.
10. Ascertain if they are looking after voters classified as "People's party" where they have heretofore acted and worked with us, and how they expect to reclaim them.
11. The chairman should furnish the name and address to the State committee of those who are now in line with the People's party, so they can be supplied with literature.
12. Ascertain how many party clubs have been organ-

ized, and urge the organization of clubs in each township at once.

13. Ascertain if the county committee furnishes their local paper to our party voters.

14. Ascertain if any other papers are furnished.

15. If not, urge the committee in our counties to subscribe and to furnish two hundred to five hundred copies of their local party papers to voters that are not taking the paper, also to subscribe for one hundred to two hundred party organs.

16. If a committee has secured a perfect poll, organized clubs in each township, supplied our party voters with newspapers, they will then be in a position to receive prompt attention from the committee.

17. Ascertain if there is any local trouble, the cause of the same, and what the State committee can do to harmonize the same.

18. Have the chairman make out lists of names and addresses of German Lutheran voters, and mail the same to the State committee.

The expenses of such a campaign are beyond calculation. In former years, prior to the recent publicity laws, few knew the amounts or the sources of the enormous sums that were used.¹ The purely legitimate expenses are very large.

**Campaign
Expenses**

The printing and distribution of one important speech has amounted to as much as \$5000. Senator Hanna estimated the Republican bill for printing alone in 1900 at \$200,000. At headquarters, in New York and Chicago, occupying rooms that call for high rents, there are from forty to one hundred employees. When one thinks of the halls, special trains, bands and banners, printing bills, speakers' pay and expenses, and the "pools" contributed just before the election

¹ For the abuses connected with campaign funds see Chapter XIX.

by party advocates and candidates (to say nothing of the candidates' personal expenses), it will be seen that what a campaign costs in money is indeed beyond estimate. It is safe to say that in a single State \$250,000 would not cover the expenditure of one party, distributed through State and local committees.¹

Speaking of the closing days of an American presidential campaign an English writer says:

“I can never forget the last day of October, 1896, when, as the climax to a passionate campaign, New York closed up its stores and workshops, and threw its whole strength into a triumphant demonstration of faith. One hundred and twenty thousand men—merchants, lawyers, publishers, railroad potentates, the heads of every trade and profession—tramped between a million spectators over five miles of Broadway pavements to testify their belief in their party cause. In the line I was permitted to join were the chiefs of one of the largest publishing firms in the country, the editors of two famous journals, an ex-Cabinet Minister, and an author and artist of international fame—all bearing the Stars and Stripes, and decorated with horrifying ‘gold bugs,’ and fantastic badges, ribbons, and flowers of the same inspiring hue.

Of the many thousands who must have watched that procession without sympathizing with its purpose, not one summed up in itself all the characteristics, good and bad, of American electioneering; and outside the States I do not suppose that anything like it would be possible. In England, at any rate it would be simply unimaginable. It might begin in a parade, but it would certainly end in a riot. One could not help wondering whether the result obtained was worth all the time, money, and effort spent in producing it.

¹ Excessive and corrupt expenditures have been checked in recent years.

But Americans beyond question are without rivals in the art of directing campaigns, and one must be satisfied with thinking that they know quite well what they are about when they select 'booming' as their favorite weapon of offense."¹

The single fateful day for which all this extensive organization exists and for which this expensive preparation is made is "the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November" of the election year. From this point the election process is constitutional, under forms and requirements established by the Constitution and the law, rather than by **The Election** party agencies. But the parties guard the proceedings at all stages.² The State supplies the ballot, but the party officials certify to the electoral candidates, making sure that all the names of the loyal party candidates are in place. In the actual conduct of the election the party organizations are the chief factors. The inspector of the election board will be a township trustee, or some other public officer appointed or elected by party influence and party process, and the judges and clerks are appointed by party committeemen or at the behest of party interests. The election boards are constituted, unfortunately, not for the purpose of guarding the public interests by seeing that there is an honest and fair election, but for the purpose of promoting and safeguarding party interests. The agents of the two large parties are there to keep one another in check. Third parties are not represented, though in some States they are allowed watchers at the count. Unless the

¹ Sydney Brooks on "English and American Elections," *Harper's Monthly*, August, 1900.

² See chapter on "The Presidency," in *The American Republic and Its Government*, p. 117, *sqq.*

election is unusually close the result of the balloting throughout the nation will be known on the morning following the election. A nation with an aggregate of more than twenty-six million voters under the operation of party government will have chosen its chief Executive.

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"Management of the Taft Campaign," Walter Wellman, in *Review of Reviews*, vol. xxxviii., p. 432, October, 1908.

For comparison of methods of campaigning in England and America, see:

(1) Porritt's *The Englishman at Home*.

(2) Richard Harding Davis's *Our English Cousins*, chap. ii.

(3) Sydney Brooks on "English and American Elections," *Harper's Monthly*, August, 1900. The same author's "Election Manners in England and America," in *Harper's Weekly*, Feb. 12, 1910.

(4) Buxton, C. R., *Electioneering Up to Date*.

Bryce's *American Commonwealth*, vol. ii., chaps. lxxi.-lxxiii.

PART III

ETHICAL PROBLEMS IN EARLY POLITICS

CHAPTER XVII

OUR POLITICAL MORALITY

IN another volume, in discussing the "principles of the fathers," we had to do chiefly with the rights of the citizen.¹ In the present chapter we consider his duties. It is well to do as our fathers did, to "know our rights and dare maintain them." But duties are coördinate with rights. Men will not fight for their civic rights who have no sense of their civic duties.

**Political
Duties and
Political
Rights** Rights cannot be maintained if duties are neglected. They go together, and in our political life of to-day it is essential that emphasis be laid upon our duties rather than upon our rights. When a man, for instance, looks upon voting as a "right" instead of a duty, he is apt to regard his vote as his property, to be used as something of his own, to do with as he chooses, without public responsibility. A man's vote is not his own; it is his country's,—a sovereign weapon entrusted to him, not merely for the protection of his own rights, but to be used for the defense of his country's interests. He is in duty bound to use it for the defense of the weak and for the protection of the highest public welfare. It is so with all his rights; they all involve corresponding duties to the state.

¹ *The American Republic and Its Government*, chap. i.

In a democratic state political rights cannot be secure unless they have their foundations in the righteousness of political life. In a republic under universal suffrage,—under “government by the people,”—there are certain requirements essential and fundamental to the continued safety of the national life. If the people are to rule the state, they should understand the conditions on which alone this can be done.

1. The people must be intelligent. “If a people expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never can be,” says Jefferson. Jefferson, “the founder of the University of Virginia,” sought, for the American democracy that he gave his life to establish, an education as universal as the liberty which he held to be the heritage of all men. The people may be ignorant and depraved under a despotism where they have no power or responsibility, but a democratic state with universal suffrage must provide for universal education. “Popular government without popular education is but a prologue to a farce, or to a tragedy, or to both,” says Madison. If the designs of the false leader and the pleas of the wily demagogue are to be recognized and exposed, it must be by educated intelligence. Every true citizen will, therefore, do all he can to promote the general intelligence of his community. It is for this reason that the state provides schools and colleges and universities. It must do so in its own defense, that its citizens, its sovereign rulers, may be intelligent.

2. The people must be virtuous. Moral character is the foundation of the state. If the people’s political rectitude and integrity are sapped and undermined, the foundation is gone.

Fundamental Conditions in Popular Government.

1. Intelligence

2. Political Virtue

No government can live when the sources of its power have become corrupted. As long as the hearts of the people are right, the nation is safe. But when the springs of our national life are poisoned, the inevitable result is decay and dissolution, and the outcome is the man on horseback with the iron hand of despotism, or a plutocracy where the people cringe and fawn at the behest of those who have money, or places, or favors to bestow. "When virtue dies the man is dead." It is so with the nation. ✓

It is not the abundance of material wealth, but the courage of the national conscience that, in the last resort, must be relied upon to save the national life. It is in moral character that the citizen becomes a shield of defense to the state. It is this that gives him devotion and sacrifice for war, courage in battle, insight and boldness in leadership, and the manly independence to enable him to withstand the wiles and seductions of the corruptionist. ✓

3. The people must be *free*. They must not be restrained by power, they must not be too much bound by party; they must not be bought by favor. This involves free speech, free press, free assembly, free petition, a free ballot. Without these there can be no free thought,—and without freedom to think there can be no freedom in government. **3. Freedom**

This is true liberty, when free-born men,
Having to advise the public, may speak free.

Every citizen will seek to preserve this liberty at all hazards. Liberty of speech and of the press may be abused, but we hold it safer to run the risk of this abuse, holding every man responsible for the effect of his words,

rather than suffer the denial of freedom. The time was when great thinkers and leaders of the people could publish their thoughts only by the consent of the royal licenser. If the people are to be intelligent, if they are to understand questions of government and public policies, there must be free discussion; there must be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for "opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making." "Give me the liberty," says Milton, "to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience above all liberties." Milton, the defender for all time of free

speech and free teaching, refers to his visit to the famous Galileo, grown old in the service of science, "a prisoner to the Inquisition for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licenser thought," and as he contemplated the servile condition of thought and learning in other lands Milton made his immortal plea for a larger freedom:

"No man can teach with authority, which is the life of teaching, if what he teaches must exist only at the discretion of a licenser. It is a reproach to the people, undervaluing and vilifying the whole nation, for it treats them as if in such a weak and sick state of faith and discretion as to be able to take nothing down except through the pipe of a licenser. Nothing can then be written but flattery and fustian. . . . Liberty is the nurse of all great wits, that which rarefies and enlightens our spirits, like the influence of heaven; it enfranchises, enlarges, and lifts up our apprehensions degrees above ourselves. . . . Although all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, if Truth be in the field let us not misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; whoever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter? Truth is strong next

to the Almighty; she needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious; give her but room, do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, but then rather she turns herself into all shapes except her own."¹

This freedom in America is not now in danger from absolute monarchs and despots. But it may be threatened by materialism or commercialism, or party despotism, or the bribery of wealth. Social critics assert that the American plutocracy, representing the great combinations of wealth, now owns and controls the metropolitan press and dominates the public teaching of America; that this tyrannous power has even ventured to lay its hand on our colleges and universities; that college and university and church gifts and endowments from rich men are only a kind of hush-money, and that the professor or minister whose salary is paid from these gifts is a kind of agent whose business is not the investigation and dissemination of truth, but the defense of vested interests and the prevention of social and political changes. To some this criticism will seem to describe present conditions and tendencies; to others it will seem unjust and altogether too dark and pessimistic. In any case all thoughtful men will agree that if liberty is not safe in these, its securest strongholds, the decay of the free institutions of America will be rapid and certain. Our schools and colleges and universities and legislative halls and editorial sanctums and pulpits and voting booths must resist every tyranny that would deny the freedom of thought and speech and press that has been bequeathed to us.²

¹ The *Areopagitica*.

² The people in order to act freely and with intelligence must have *knowledge*. It is vitally essential to this knowledge that the *integrity*

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This freedom involves *economic freedom*. The people must be free from poverty and destitution. A man cannot be a good citizen, he cannot be free and independent and a strength to the state, without a livelihood, without a home, without some property or business or occupation or some interest to give him concern for the welfare and good order of the community.

It is, therefore, the duty of the state to preserve an economic condition that will afford to every honest and willing laborer a fair and equitable living. The man who is always on the ragged edge of subsistence, who is always living from hand to mouth, and who, when hard times come, falls into helplessness and pauperism,—such a man is apt to make a very poor citizen. You

of the press shall be safeguarded, that important news shall not be suppressed nor *false news* disseminated. Jefferson said very wisely that he preferred a *free* newspaper to a standing army; but the most insidious foe to free government and far more dangerous than single despots or standing armies is a *perverted press* and the corruption of the avenues of information. The people must have the facts. These it is the business of a free and competent newspaper to give. If the people are given full and truthful information about public business the democracy will be able to judge men and measures and take care of itself. This indicates the need of *independence* in a newspaper or a journal, that its columns should not be blindly biased and partisan, but that it should be willing to give its readers the *truth* and the facts bearing on both sides of a controversy. The people are competent to form their own opinions.

The last generation has witnessed a transition in metropolitan centers from the editor-owned to the capitalist-owned newspaper, the whole staff from managing editor to errand boy being subject to the control of syndicated wealth or millionaire promoters. There have been exposures of base and shameful methods by which corporate wealth in the control of newspapers has suppressed information of the means by which “big business” in alliance with the “crooked boss” has controlled public men and government agencies and has committed heinous public wrongs against numerous cities and states. The struggle for the control of railways, traction companies, and public utilities will illustrate this. The result of this corrupt control of the newspaper columns by the

cannot appeal with much assurance to the patriotism and public spirit of a man who does not know where his next day's living is to come from, or whether his wife and children are to have a shelter over their heads the coming winter. Wealth may accumulate without much harm, provided a reasonable amount of it remains with the honest working folk. But if by its concentration the people are impoverished, the state will decay. Every honest and self-respecting citizen should have an opportunity for self-support, and any industrial or economic condition that prevents this is a menace of civil and political disaster. The voter who wishes "the glorious privilege of being independent"

moneyed "interests" has been to arouse public suspicion not only against newspapers but against politicians, legislatures, congress, and public men generally, with the consequence that honest men and honest business have suffered with all the rest. We are all linked together in a common lot and the *commonwealth* requires that there shall be *publicity*—light and truth—on public affairs.

In this connection the student is advised to read Prof. Edward A. Ross's *Changing America*, especially his consideration of the "sacred cows" which newspapers shield from the light of day and the need of a publicly subsidized press. Attention may also be called to the fact that there has lately been organized a "National Voters' League," and a "Popular Government League" which are devoting themselves to the problem of getting reliable political information to the public,—“to bridge the long mysterious distance between constituents and their public servants.” Subtle, powerful, and highly organized interests are constantly seeking special favors of Congress and State legislatures at the expense of the general public, and these organizations will attempt to place before the public knowledge of what is going on. The Leagues are non-partisan and are directed by Executive Committees of men and women who have the confidence of the public. They propose to mail bulletins free, as far as funds permit, to newspapers, magazines, high schools, colleges, and libraries. Lynn Haines is the Executive Secretary of the National Voters' League, 829-31 Woodward Building, Washington, D. C., and Judson King, of the Popular Government League, Munsey Building, Washington.

must have an honest living. For "an adequate livelihood is the one sure foundation of that honest independence which is not only one of the greatest of virtues, but the fruitful mother of virtues,—of courage, tenacity, endurance, self-reliance, thrift, cheerfulness, hope."¹ The man who by honest work maintains himself and those dependent upon him in an adequate livelihood has realized no small part of the substance of citizenship.

This economic livelihood involves economic independence. The laborer supporting himself by his daily wage must be as free to follow his own judgment and conviction as his rich employer. The citizen cannot be free if he is dependent on another for "the privilege of earning a living." The Duke of Newcastle, in England, less than a century ago, turned five hundred of his tenants out of the houses and lands they occupied because they refused to vote as he directed. He justified his conduct by his right to do what he would with his own. But our political ethics to-day and our common sense of justice repudiate such a right. If a landlord or proprietor or capitalist or manufacturer should attempt such coercion now, he would at least find it necessary to conceal his motive. Public sentiment would righteously denounce him. Such a man would be marked as a mean tyrant, and he would be condemned by his fellows. Every influence and protection should be used to fortify the laborer in his right to follow his independent interests and convictions. Moral influence, compliance and deference of the ignorant to those who are better informed, voluntarily following trusted advisers and leaders,—all these are legitimate and are to be expected. But the

¹ Maccunn, *Ethics of Citizenship*, p. 75. The student of political ethics should consult this thoughtful and valuable work.

laborer in humble station should suffer no penalty and receive no reward from his wealthier neighbor for his political conduct. The laborer's political opinions are not hired. To control the political conduct of another, whether by reward or punishment, comes under the general head of bribery or coercion. It is a denial of the citizen's independence and freedom. Personal independence is a vital and essential part of the freedom that must be preserved to the people.

4. The people must be patriotic. Patriotism is love of country. It is public spirit,—the spirit that leads one to devote himself to the service of the community. It does not involve seeking and **4. Patriotism** holding public office, though one may be able to perform great patriotic services in office. It does not always involve going to war, merely to defend one's country against external enemies; though on the field of battle one may perform the last and highest act of patriotism,—he may pay “the last full measure” of the patriot's devotion. It does not involve merely devotion to one's Government. The Government may be utterly wrong, subverting by its policy the country's best interest, and it may be the patriot's duty to use his best endeavors to change his Government's policy, or even to subvert the Government itself and thus secure for his country an opportunity to pursue its highest welfare. Tolstoy in Russia was a better patriot than the Czar; Pitt and Burke and Barré and Charles James Fox were better patriots than George III. though by their bold speech, in opposition to their Government, they gave moral aid and comfort to the American Revolution in arms.

Patriotism requires not only physical courage that will lead one to fight and, if need be, to die in the service

of one's country, but the higher, nobler moral courage that will lead him, if need be, to oppose his country's Government in a wrongful and immoral course. It has been said of Charles James Fox that, whenever he differed from the policy of his Government, "he never appeared to have the smallest leaning or bias in favor of his country."¹ It is not necessary that the patriot should be so indifferent. He ought to have a leaning in favor of his own country, at least until the peaceful federation of the nations, when it may be said that his "country is the world, his countrymen are all mankind." But as he may love his family more than himself, his village more than his neighborhood, his State more than his village, his country more than his State,—as a higher love may demand his allegiance against a lower,—so he may love God and all mankind more than his country. It is a noble love that leads one to die for his country, not that his country may be saved from bodily harm or to promote its material aggrandizement, but to save the nation as a noble organ of service for God and humanity. Loyalty to country may not override this higher loyalty. As the patriot must love God supremely, he will acknowledge the supreme law of love and righteousness, and he will, therefore, stand out stoutly and to the end against his country's pursuing a wrongful and unjust course. We are sometimes taught that if our country does good we should defend and protect her; if she does evil we should still defend and protect her, while striving to have the wrong made right. At all hazards the patriot will strive to have the wrong made right; for the truest defense a citizen can offer his country is to prevent her pursuit of an unrighteous course. It is not material prosperity, nor

¹ Lecky, *American Revolution*, p. 332.

physical strength, nor wealth, nor arms, but righteousness that exalts a nation.

It is such patriotism that will lead us to cultivate peace, justice, brotherhood, and international fairness. Such patriotism will demand honesty in the public service; it will denounce as traitorous the man who cheats the nation or robs the public treasury; or who by trickery and bribery and knavery secures legislation for selfish ends against the public interest; or the able-bodied "old soldier" who secures a pension by perjury and accepts pay many times over for services once rendered, and which, it was supposed, he had unselfishly offered to the call of his country. The man who, as a judge or an executive, takes an oath to execute just laws, then betrays his trust and his country by going into alliance with criminals from whom he takes bribes for immunity, is a *traitor*. There is no higher form of treason than this, and the man who does it deserves to take his place in public estimation with men like Benedict Arnold, who are willing to sell their country for gold.

Patriotism was once denounced as the "last refuge of a scoundrel." No doubt it is used by unscrupulous men as a cloak for evil practices and designs. The men who do these things cannot be patriots, no matter how much they profess to honor the flag or how conspicuous they may be on the memorial holidays of the nation. Patriotism loves righteousness and hates iniquity; it bears burdens; it does not seek special favors; it casts out fear and selfishness, and seeks the welfare of all,—that public welfare which is the highest law.

The primary and fundamental habits of civic patriotism have been summarized as follows¹:

¹ Mr. Bryce, in *Forum*, vol. xv.

"1. To strive to know what is best for one's country as a whole. The patriot will not be content to be ignorant of his country's welfare. He will seek to know something of the institutions of his country and their workings; of the needs of the community and its management; of the laws and their requirements; of public officers and their duties; of the history of his country and its great men and of the principles and services for which they have stood.

"2. To place one's country's interest, when one knows it, above party, or class, or sectional, or selfish interest.

"3. To be willing to take trouble, personal and even tedious pains, for the well governing of one's country. Whatever the community to which one belongs, be it township, village, city, state, or nation, patriotism involves the willingness of service and sacrifice for the common good."

Patriotism does not stop with obedience to the laws and the payment of taxes. It is no evidence of a man's patriotic citizenship that he keeps out of jail and out of the police courts. Patriotism is not passive,—a mere abstaining from evil. It is not merely an abstract definition, or a feeling. It requires expression, not merely in words, but in action, in deeds. A man's patriotism is shown by his life, not only in private, as "the just man who lives honestly, injures none, and gives every man his due," but also in his relation to his public duties,—in speech, in vote, in his political activity. The patriot is "the one who serves." He may serve the community in attending political conventions and caucuses and using his wits and manly courage in detecting, exposing, and defeating evil designs calculated to injure the state.

"No class of disputes needs more a judgment undisturbed by passion than international ones. Large numbers of people think it unpatriotic to decide, or at least to say,

that their own country is wrong in a dispute with another. Patriotism has nothing to do with that matter; it is consistent with either view. *Patriotism* is a virtue which leads a man to sacrifice himself for the good of his country. It is *not patriotism* to flatter one's own countrymen, or to assure them that they are right in what they are doing. That is merely swimming with the stream, one of the most alluring forms of indolence. A man is not a patriot because he desires that the community to which he belongs shall be aggrandized at the expense of other communities to which he does not belong. To desire the success of a cause because it is his own, and not because it is right, is a form of selfishness in man. 'My country right or wrong' is no more patriotic than 'Myself right or wrong' is noble and unselfish. The maxim is essentially selfish and would make any settlement between nations impossible, except by war. The man who will take pains to find where lies the right and wrong, or, it may be, the wise or the unwise course; the man who, being convinced that the existing rulers of his country are wrong or unwise, has the courage to stand up and say so, who confronts rulers, and penalties, legal or social, and frowns and sneers and howling multitudes;—the man is the *patriot*, is he who sacrifices himself for his country's good."¹

5. In addition to intelligence, virtue, freedom, and patriotism, and in order to maintain these, a people must have *religion*. Not an established church, nor a religion imposed and sustained by law; but a free Church in a free State, with religion and the essentials of religious unity in the hearts of the people. Religion is defined as "the life of God in the soul of man." The life of God must

¹ Lord Hobhouse, New York *Independent*, Aug. 26, 1900. See also an article on "Patriotism" by Professor Goldwin Smith in the *Independent*, July 3, 1902, and an oration of George William Curtis, *Orations and Addresses*, vol. i.

be in the soul of the nation. The nation has a soul; it is not only material, it is spiritual. The foundations of its morality and virtue, and therefore of its spiritual life, are in its religion. Morality and religion are inseparable forces. It is in the immovable foundations of morality and religion that a nation finds its oneness, its permanence, its common life. There has been no greater saving force in the life of the American nation than pure religion,—faith in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, sympathy for the poor, and unspottedness from the world, justice and integrity with their foundations laid in eternal and immutable laws. Its influence has tended to give the people unity of moral ideals; to prevent social separateness and class strife; to promote brotherhood and equality of opportunities; to bring the capitalist and the laborer, the rich and the poor, into mutual helpfulness and sympathy; to prevent anarchy and the lawlessness of mobs; to “establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, and insure the blessings of liberty” to ourselves and our posterity.

Government began in America “In the name of God. Amen!” Such was the immortal beginning of the compact on the *Mayflower*. In Virginia, also, it was recognized by its earliest charters that those who were to inhabit its precincts were “to determine to live together in the Fear and Worship of Almighty God.” And in the first written constitution of America, being also the first in the history of the world, it was expressly recognized that “to mayntayne the peace and union of a people there should be an orderly and decent government established according to God.”¹ “Unless the Lord build the house they labor in vain who build it,”

¹ Fundamental Orders of Connecticut.

were the words of Holy Writ, quoted by Dr. Franklin in the great convention that made our Constitution in 1787, as he suggested divine guidance in the deliberations of the convention.

If the religious life of a people decays, if the religious motives no longer restrain the passions, desires, and ambitions of a nation, the people sink into materialism and selfishness, incapable of service or of sacrifice or devotion. A State will arise where the law prevails that "Might makes right."

It is well said that of all forms of government democracy is most dependent on religion. What will do more than the religious spirit to promote the sense of personal responsibility in the exercise of political rights? To vote in the fear of God is a fine restraint. If a man is to resist the tyranny of the king, or the tyranny of wealth or the tyranny of the majority, he must *believe*,—he must believe that his conduct will be counted unto him for righteousness and that "there is a *Power to which he can ally himself and be invincible*"¹; that his duties, if not his rights, are divinely appointed; that God reigns; that right will prevail; that by justice a nation shall flourish, and that by injustice will it faint and fail.

It is this faith that will help the people to see that they cannot separate their politics from their ethics, nor their ethics from their religion; that man's life is one and indivisible; that from this oneness of the divine life in man springs the moral law, a law that applies alike to a man's business, to his religion, and to his politics. To reveal that law and to teach men to live by it is one of the functions of religion and of the religious teacher and prophet; and by nothing is the decay of a nation's life more surely wrought than by the decay and corruption

¹ Maccunn, *Ethics of Citizenship*, p. 84.

of its religion and by the worldliness and apostasy of its religious teachers.

These fundamental moral qualities in a democratic state will produce in the people a *love of order* and a *reverence for law*.

Law and order are essential parts of true constitutional freedom. The will of the people, like the will of the king, has no right to resist or to be above the law. *Government by law* is paramount to every interest, for upon this all other interests depend. There can be no freedom without it. The long struggle of our fathers for constitutional liberty has been a struggle to secure government by laws rather than government by men. The voice of the people *right* is the voice of God, not otherwise. Intelligence, virtue, patriotism, love of liberty, religion, are the moral bulwarks for the state because they all unite to restrain the people from lawlessness and anarchy and the violence of mobs. To any great and fundamental change in law and government the people must proceed by the processes and under the restraints of constitutional order and law. It is when government by law is endangered that the rights and liberties of the people are most seriously threatened. To undermine the defenses of law is to lead inevitably to the despotism of the military dictator or to the despotism of anarchy and the mob,—the most abhorrent to freemen of all forms of social disease. Sometimes in the irrepressible struggle for liberty the people have had to defend or recover their rights by arms against the violence and lawlessness of the governing classes, and no doubt the people have many times suffered wrong under the restrictions of con-

Political
Morality
Involves
Love of
Order

And
Changes
in the State
by Process
of Law

ventional law. But in a free and intelligent state, rights are to be won and great changes made, not by bloodshed and revolution, but by means of public discussion and the processes of public law.

This reverence for law will cultivate in the majority a righteous respect for the rights of the minority; it will make life and all just rights of property more sacred; and in times of social progress and change it will make the people radical only when they are sure they are right and wisely conservative from fear of injustice and wrong.

The same qualities will bring *leadership* to the people. Without safe leadership popular government is impossible. The masses cannot act except under direction. A multitude of counsellors may lead to safety, but without wise guidance the people fall. If the people cannot find capable leaders, of courage, of educated intelligence, of rectitude, and of unswerving devotion to the people's interests, they will be helpless before the classes that represent cunning and power and that would exploit and oppress the people for selfish ends. There is no form of government in which rectitude in leadership and office is more vital than in a democracy. The people may mean well and would do right, but they must have great thinkers for the solution of their problems and bold and devoted leaders for the execution of these solutions. Political agitators and demagogues often proclaim themselves for a popular cause and declaim on the people's wrongs, but as soon as they get power and place the rich and powerful classes buy them from their allegiance and induce them to betray their trust. Having climbed to power by popular support, they kick away the ladder

And Respect
for the
Rights of the
Minority

Necessity of
Leadership
in a De-
mocracy

by which they have ascended. Being betrayed by their leaders and made to feel that law is controlled by power or bought by wealth, the people lose faith in law and government. Thus are begotten distrust, suspicion, and the spirit of revolution and anarchy.

It is for this reason that the moral virtues in a democracy are so vital, and it is for this cause that schools, and colleges, and all the agencies of education exist, that young men may be trained for competent and faithful leadership in the state. The safety of the republic depends not upon forms of government nor upon the agencies and machinery of parties, but upon the constancy and faithfulness with which these great moral principles are exemplified in the political life and leadership of the people.

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CHAPTER XVIII

AN HONEST BALLOT

IT is the vital moral qualities of which we have spoken in the preceding chapter that must be relied upon, in the last resort, for the solution of the political problems confronting the people. They need emphasis and constant nourishment, especially in a republic that has provided for universal suffrage. So wide a suffrage presents many difficulties and problems. It is the purpose of this and the following chapters to discuss briefly some of the problems under universal suffrage in relation to party organization and party practice.

First, the problem of the suffrage itself.

Educational and property qualifications for suffrage are not inconsistent with American political principles. Capacity and a reasonable interest in the order and good government of the state are not undemocratic or unrepublican prerequisites to the possession of the suffrage. During much of our history, and in some of the States of the present time, such qualifications for the suffrage have been imposed. But democracy does require that whatever qualifications are imposed should be applied to all alike and that all should stand equal before the law. A property qualification is deemed undemocratic,

**The Problem of
Universal
Suffrage**

since by the principles of democracy power inheres in the people, in their persons, not in their holdings. In Great Britain under an act of 1918,¹ the franchise was revised and extended, several million women and new male voters being enfranchised. Male voters must be 21 years old and have resided in houses, or occupied

business premises, of an annual rental of not less than £10, in the same parliamentary borough or county, or one contiguous thereto, for six months just prior to registering. A

**Suffrage
Qualifica-
tions in
England**

woman voter must be 30 years of age and entitled to be registered as a local government voter, with a property rental requirement of not less than £5 yearly; or she must be the wife of a husband entitled to vote. There is also a University franchise, to qualify for which a man of 21 or a woman of 30 must have taken a degree. Formerly residence in a district was not required of the voter and one might vote in every county where he held land or sufficient property. But under the act of 1918 no person may vote at a general election for more than two constituencies, for one of which, in the case of a man, there must be a residence qualification, and, in the case of a woman, a local government qualification, her own or her husband's. Disqualified for voting are infants, idiots, lunatics, aliens bankrupts, and peers; and for five years after the war conscientious objectors who have not fulfilled certain conditions as to the performance of war work or other work of national importance; the idea underlying this last restriction is that service should go with privilege and power. The number of persons qualified to vote in Great Britain under the act of 1918 was, in 1920, about 21,776,000, nearly one half the population, the women

¹ Representation of the People Act.

voters numbering about 8,856,000. Prior to 1918 the number of qualified voters was about 8,350,000.¹ This is a very wide suffrage for England compared with the aristocratic conditions prevailing less than one hundred years ago, when Jeffersonian democracy was striking down all barriers to universal suffrage in America. Under certain property qualifications the old English idea, or practice, was preserved of regarding political power as attaching to property, not to men. Their laws were based on custom not on general principles. Democratic America, though at first following this practice, long ago definitely abandoned it; it committed itself to the principle of manhood suffrage,—one man, one vote. Americans were more disposed to assert the rights of men; and the tendency of democracy was to look upon the suffrage as a personal right as well as a political privilege. Americans proclaimed in theory at least, that the privilege of voting pertained to the personality, not to the property, of men. Both by the theory and practice of democracy the privilege of voting has come to be regarded as a right of representation. Representation in America is the representation of persons. The right to representation, if such a right may be claimed at all, is the right of a member of the nation who is a *person*. The fundamental quality of the act of voting is *personality*, the capacity to exercise a free will in helping to determine the course of the government and the state²; that is, a *person* is one who has a free will,—one whose action is free and self-determined. Children, the dependent, the demented, the insane, the idiotic, the intoxicated, con-

**Basis of the
Suffrage in
England
and in
America
Compared**

¹ *Statesman's Year-Book*, 1921.

² This argument is based on Mulford's *The Nation*, p. 211.

victed criminals, are not allowed to vote, since they have not the will, the conscious self-determination and freedom of a person. Aliens are usually excluded, because voting is an act of membership in the state. Political power and allegiance go together. Unless the state may demand the one it is in no sense required to confer the other. However, in some of our States alien residents are allowed to vote. All others of these classes, together with the voters who are bribed and coerced in elections, are not free; their wills are subjected to the wills of others.

There is no other test for the suffrage so wide and fundamental. Intelligence and property qualifications must themselves rest upon this. Blackstone says:

**The Ethical
Basis for
Manhood
Suffrage**

"The true reason of requiring any qualification, with regard to property in voters, is to exclude such persons as are in so mean a situation *that they are esteemed to have no will of their own*. If it were probable that every man would give *his vote freely, then every member of the community should have a vote*. This can hardly be expected of those in abject poverty, or of such as are under the immediate dominion of others; therefore all popular states have been obliged to establish certain qualifications whereby some who are suspected to have no will of their own are excluded from voting. . . . Only such are entirely excluded as have no will of their own."

It is upon this ground that we are justified in imposing an intelligence, if not an educational, qualification for the suffrage; for ignorance also goes very far toward depriving a man of an independent will and self-direction, and it seems unreasonable to allow ignorance equal political power with knowledge.

The ethical argument for a wide suffrage—as wide as personality and manhood—is that voting is involved in the right of self-government; that it promotes patriotism and leads to an interest in public affairs; that it tends to remove discontent and promote a feeling of partnership and responsibility; that civil and religious liberty depends upon power, and that the community or body of men who have no political power have no security for their political liberty; that the suffrage is an enlightening and an educational agency, and that only by active citizenship can the political virtues be developed.

“It is the old truth that one learns to do by doing. There is no other way. Here is seen the unreason of the contention, that no man is entitled to the enjoyment of political rights till he is proved fit to exercise them. It is an impossible requirement. Before he has political rights no man’s fitness for them can be proved. There may be certain tests, educational or economic, which may be accepted as securities; but there is only one proof of fitness,—the experimental proof which shows how men use their rights after they have them.”¹

The advocates of democracy believe that the experiment has justified the assertion of the American principle—the principle of equality at the ballot-box. While they recognize that the state must define the qualifications of the elector and lay down the conditions on which the electorate should be enlarged, yet they insist that this should be done, not arbitrarily nor by accident, but on the recognized democratic principle of *personal equality*.

“If every ordinary unskilled laborer,” says John Stuart Mill, “ought to have one vote, a skilled laborer ought to

¹ Maccunn, *Ethics of Citizenship*, p. 103.

have *two*; a farmer, manufacturer, or trader, should have three or four; a lawyer, physician, surgeon, a clergyman, a literary man, an artist, ought to have five or six."

This is a rational principle—that political power should conform to relative capacity or importance. But it is a principle to which that of manhood suffrage is opposed—namely, that all freemen, with power of self-direction and control, shall be equally members of the state, with an equal right to representation in the body determining the policy and conduct of the Government.

So, with the advance of democracy in America the tendency has always been toward an enlargement of the suffrage. The negro was brought in on the plea that he is a man and should be recognized as a free self-directing person. All foreigners (except Mongolians) are easily naturalized and quickly enfranchised, and by 1920 women had become enfranchised throughout America.

When the movement began in America for woman suffrage it was clearly obvious that the denial of suffrage to women was inconsistent with the principles of American democracy, though conferring the suffrage had never been based on any general principle. But whether it be based on property, personality, capacity, service, or the principle of democratic equality, no rational ground could be found for the exclusion of women. Now by the 19th amendment (adopted August 20, 1920) the last barrier to universal suffrage in America has been struck down and the Constitution of the United States forbids any State to deny the suffrage to any citizen of the United States on account of sex. This final triumph followed only after a long tedious and trying campaign which cost many worthy

A Widening Suffrage

and noble women very much in the way of service and sacrifice. Susan B. Anthony stood out as a leader among women in this struggle, accompanied by Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone, Julia Ward Howe, and later followed by Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, Mrs. Ida Husted Harper and others. Robert Owen, Frances Wright, Abbie Kelly, William Lloyd Garrison, Lucretia Mott and other advanced reformers, advocated woman suffrage for America nearly a hundred years ago, in the period of the abolition agitation. In the course of the struggle the reforming parties—the Socialists, the Prohibitionists, the Labor parties, and the late Progressive party openly declared for woman suffrage, and before it was finally brought about for the whole country many of the States, especially in the West, granted suffrage to women. It is no longer a controverted question in American politics.¹

¹ The States conferring suffrage on women prior to the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment were as follows: Wyoming, 1869; Colorado, 1893; Utah and Idaho, 1896; Washington, 1910; California, 1911; Arizona, Kansas, and Oregon, 1912; Montana and Nevada, 1914; New York, 1917; Michigan, Oklahoma, and South Dakota, 1918. In 1913 Illinois conferred presidential suffrage on women; they were allowed to vote for Presidential Electors and Congressmen but not for State officers. There was partial suffrage for women in other States. When the National Amendment was in the final stages of its discussion in the United States Senate it was contended that the National government and three-fourths of the States had no right to impose, or force, woman suffrage on any State unwilling to grant it for its own people; that, since the right to decide who should vote had always belonged to the State, it was a matter for each State to decide for itself. But it has been decided that the Nation may limit the rights of the States in such fundamental matters. Originally it was the "right" of a State to permit some of its inhabitants to be enslaved, and to deny some of its people equal civil rights under the law, such as the right to hold, inherit, or bequeath property, to make contracts and have them enforced, or to appeal to the courts for justice. The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amend-

It is still the rule that the laws of the State determine who may vote, the only restriction being that no State may deny or abridge the suffrage "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude or of sex."¹ The negro has been deprived of the suffrage in some Southern States contrary to the spirit of this provision, partly because of race prejudice, partly because the mass of the negroes have been deemed unfit for the suffrage.² But the "grandfather clauses" and other restrictions are passing away and the negro is coming into a larger freedom in the South and to the privileges of the ballot. Race antagonisms are being allayed and the negroes by their industry and education are becoming better qualified for citizenship. Legally and professedly we make the negro the political equal of the white man and the time is not far distant when equal rights, political as well as civil, will be accorded in all the States to all men alike, regardless of race or color.

The political privilege and power that are involved in the ballot have come to the people through trial and struggle. A free ballot is wisely called the "right preservative of all rights." If this right cannot be preserved all rights may be lost. To deprive the voter

ments took away these "rights" of the State, while the Fifteenth and Eighteenth have further abridged these "rights" by forbidding any State to impose unreasonable and undemocratic discriminations in the matter of suffrage. Voting, like personal liberty and civil rights, is thus treated as a *national* matter and as a fundamental privilege of an American citizen. Woodburn and Moran, *The Citizen and the Republic*, p. 205. For the history of the Woman Suffrage Movement see the several volumes on that subject by Mrs. Ida Husted Harper and others, and Mrs. Harper's *Life of Susan B. Anthony*. See also the periodical literature and the Cyclopædias.

¹ Fifteenth and Nineteenth Amendments.

² See *The American Republic*, p. 350, sq.

of his free will by bribery or intimidation is to rob him of the manhood on which his right of suffrage depends and by which alone he can peacefully defend his rights of person and property. To prevent the freedom of elections by bribery or force is to strike at the very root of free popular government.

There is no more vital concern to American political life than the preservation of a pure ballot. If the people cannot be protected from venality, if elections are to be determined by bribery and the use of money, there is no possible way by which the people can defend their rights and interests against the designs of unscrupulous wealth and power. To drive voters from the polls by bayonets is to deprive freemen of their liberty; to buy voters at the polls with money is no less a perversion of freedom. While popular elections are controlled by corruption, the people are only nominally free, as under such conditions their so-called freedom becomes merely the instrument of their own enslavement.

Herein is the great danger of a plutocracy. It sets itself to corrupt the morals in order to undermine the freedom of the people, that the government and the laws may be controlled by special and moneyed interest. Between anarchy on the one hand and a corrupt plutocracy maintaining its power by money and bribery on the other, there is but little to choose, and there is but a short distance between them. In England, before the reform of 1832, fifteen thousand persons elected a majority in the House of Commons. A wealthy few bought the seats, or owned them. This plutocracy of landholders dictated the laws. History tells of the degradation and suffering of the common people of England in that

A Free Ballot the Right Preservative of All Rights

Plutocracy and a Free Ballot

period.¹ It brought England to the verge of revolution. But this oppression by property occurred under the forms of law. If in America, in defiance of law, corrupt wealth, using place-seeking politicians as its tools, is to corrupt the voters and buy the laws, submission to such a Government will be, of course, a mere matter of expediency and not of duty. The laws that such a Government makes are not morally binding on the people. All respect for law and authority is destroyed, and the very foundations of society are undermined. If it be understood that the rich may buy the poor it will be believed that the poor may loot the rich, and this is anarchy.²

The extent of venal voting in some of the States and the remedies proposed present too large a theme for adequate consideration here. But a few of the more important remedies for this and other abuses connected with the ballot may be briefly considered. Most of these abuses gather about the base and dangerous practice of the buying and selling of votes and the remedies are proposed as a means of preserving to the state an *honest ballot*.

The *Australian system* of voting by which the state furnishes the official ballot and the voter is isolated in the privacy of a booth in which he may mark his ballot freely, has done much good. Its essential features are as follows:

The Australian Ballot System

¹ See *The American Republic and Its Government*, p. 41.

² Unless the evil of vote-buying is checked by reform the result will be either restoration of free government through suffering and revolution, or the people will be overawed by the military arm, and a corrupt Government will seek to satisfy their demands by lavish expenditure and the splendor of imperial power; splendid monarchies have always thought to conciliate the proletariat with bread and circuses, with pageantry and parade, and with the charity of an occasional royal dinner to the poor.

1. All ballots are printed and distributed by public officials at public expense.

2. Each ballot contains the names of all candidates that have been nominated by any political party or group of citizens. All nominations must be certified to before the proper officers a certain number of days before the election, and the election officers must certify to the genuineness of the ballot when it is given to the voter. This they do by endorsing, or writing their names on the back of the ballot.

3. Ballots may be obtained only within the voting places on election day and from election officers. They are to be marked in private in the election booth; must contain no distinguishing mark such as might enable the ballot of the voter to be identified; must be so folded as to conceal the face of the ballot as it is handed to the election officer or deposited in the ballot-box. The essential point is that the voter shall not reveal, nor shall any one ascertain, how he has voted.

4. Special provision is made against ballots being lost or stolen. No one is allowed to have a genuine ballot outside of the election booth; no electioneering shall occur within a certain distance of the polling place.

In most States these provisions are accompanied by corrupt practices acts¹ and registration laws. *Registration laws* require the voters to register under public authority thirty or sixty days or some time before the election. This leads to the identification of the voters and helps to prevent "repeating" and other forms of fraudulent voting, though often false registration lists are made up for fraudulent purposes. A suitable residence requirement is also safeguarded by registration. Voters cannot be colonized for election purposes

¹ See Chap. XXIII and p. 406.

nor foreigners and non-residents herded and rushed in during election week.

These provisions for the Australian system came into operation in American election laws after 1888, Massachusetts leading off in that year and Indiana and six other States following in 1889. Now only two States, South Carolina and Georgia, retain the old system of voting. Prior to 1888 slip tickets were used. The party managers or committees furnished their own ballots, or candidates and private individuals might print and distribute ballots to suit their own interests and desires. Mixed tickets were printed under headings that were misleading and the "straight" party voter in order to make sure of getting a true party ticket had to apply to the authorized party agent, and he could not then be quite sure. The bribed voter was accompanied to the voting window where the exposed ballot which had been prepared for and given to him was handed to the election officer. Flagrant bribery was common. The employers of large numbers of men sought to control their voting. Party rivalry, the struggle for the vast salaries at stake under the spoils system, the interest of wealthy men in the election results and the control of the Government, led to the raising of vast campaign funds and to a condition in which corruption dominated the ballot-box. The state in self-defense had to protect the voter from the pressure that was brought to bear upon him.

Australian ballot laws, however, have not done away with election bribery. The political perverts, the crooks and the boodlers, the unscrupulous partisans who deliberately and wickedly plan how they may pollute the state and buy the offices and the laws, will find some way to practice their low trade, especially if, instead of

being put behind prison bars, they are allowed to don official badges and manage the election.¹

Trusted election officers may be bribed to betray their trust. They have been known to give out an official ballot and the party workers may keep one ballot going all election day, sending one in "properly" marked and requiring another to be brought out for the next "floater" who is awaiting his price. The "assistance clause" which is contained in most of the laws opens up a way to bribery. The Pennsylvania law provides that "if any voter declares to the judge of election that by reason of any disability he desires assistance in the preparation of his ballot, he shall be permitted by the judge of election to select a qualified voter of the election district to aid him in the preparation of his ballot." This makes bribery easy. There are well-authenticated instances in which party workers have marked in one case 112 and in another 158 ballots at one election. This enables the buyer to know that the vote is delivered as promised. It is reported that in one county in Pennsylvania the superintendent of a coal mine marked the ballots of 320 of his Italian employees at a single election. In Indiana, in case disability is claimed and assistance is asked, the clerks of election may go into the booth with the voter and one of them may "fix"

Evasions
and Viola-
tions of the
Australian
Ballot Laws

The Assist-
ance Clause

¹ It is difficult for the state and the honest citizen to safeguard the ballot against corrupt and perjured election officers who intend to commit fraud. We may claim to have a government of laws and not of men, but, after all, everything depends upon the men who operate the laws. As well expect grapes from thorns or figs from thistles as an honest ballot and good government from lawless and villainous election officers.

his ballot as the voter designates. These clerks perjure themselves, violate their oath, and work in collusion with the corrupted voter in employing devices for giving information to the bribers on the outside that they may know the "goods" have been delivered and are to be duly paid for.¹

There are many variations in Australian ballots in America. We need speak of only two principal kinds, the Massachusetts type and the Indiana type. On the Massachusetts ballot the names of the candidates are arranged in groups under the title of the respective offices, and in alphabetical order. For instance, the names of all the candidates for Governor are bunched together, with an indication of each candidate's party following his name. The voter is required to make his cross mark opposite the name of each candidate for whom he wishes to vote. He must pick out his names and may not make one mark for all. Party emblems to guide the illiterate and hide-bound party voter are not used. The *Indiana* ballot provides a party emblem and a party column and is known as the "party column type" of ballot. All the candidates of each party are grouped in separate columns, each candidate under the

¹ A Populist farmer in Indiana in 1896, after the fusion with the Democrats in that year, was asked by the Democratic local committee to act as election clerk. He was told that they must have a man who would not "sell out" the party and go into collusion with the opposition to vitiate the returns, but they also needed one who would consent to violate his oath and give information as to how thirty floaters of the precinct voted when they called for assistance, as they were expected to do. The farmer replied, "I see what you want; you want an honest rascal," and he declined to render the service. It is doubtful whether election boards should be selected by party committees. There should be some judicial non-partisan check upon the appointment of a corrupt board.

title of the office for which he is running, with the party emblem at the head of each column. If a voter wishes to vote a straight party ticket he may do so by the minimum of effort, by a single stroke, merely by making one cross under the emblem within the party square or circle at the head of the party column. If he wishes to vote a mixed ticket, choosing some candidates of another party, then he must not mark within the circle containing his party emblem, but he must make a mark opposite the name of each candidate for whom he wishes to vote. If he puts his mark within the circle at the top of his ticket and *anywhere else on the ballot* his ballot is void, unless the extra mark is opposite the name of a candidate standing for an office for which his party has no nominee. If there is any blurred or distinguishing mark on his ballot it is thrown out. This system makes for "straight party voting." It is a little risky to attempt to "scratch," or to vote a mixed ticket, and many voters who would like to vote for superior candidates in another party column express the fear (a fear which party managers seek to cultivate) that if they attempt to do it they will lose their votes. So the party ticket is all voted through or pulled through together, and a strong candidate at the head of a ticket helps to elect all the rest, good and bad alike. The Republican emblem is the eagle, the Democratic emblem is the rooster, and while the independent voter has to exercise care and intelligence and go to some trouble in selecting his candidates from the various columns, all that the ignorant and hide-bound party voters need to do is to vote for their party emblem. By the Massachusetts ballot citizens vote for certain men for certain offices; by the Indiana ballot they vote for eagles and roosters—mere party signs. It would

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seem fair that the straight party voter and the independent citizen who "may wish to choose a Republican president, a Democratic governor, a Socialist District Attorney, and a Prohibition sheriff, should be put to precisely the same amount of time and trouble in voting."¹ But it may be said for the "party column" ballot that as most men are adherents of some party and do not and cannot discriminate among candidates who cannot possibly be known personally to the voters, the greater ease in voting a straight ticket serves a legitimate party purpose and tends to promote the greatest good to the greatest number. About half the States use the party column ballot in some form, but the voters, within recent years, even with this handicap have been able to exercise a considerable degree of independence, although the mass of voters still vote blindly according to arrangements made for them by party managers.²

The Short Ballot is a remedy proposed for *blind* voting. The multiplicity of elective offices has put too much of a burden upon the voter. He cannot in one day, or within a few moments of one day, elect thirty or forty officers out of a list of one hundred and fifty or two hundred candidates. His ballot is too

¹ Philip Loring Allen, *North American Review*, May, 1910.

² On the Australian Ballot, see:

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On the misuse of the "assistance clause," see an article by George Kennan in the *Outlook*, lxxiii., 432 (1903).

To vote a Straight Party Ticket, Mark a cross "X" in the Square, in the First Column, Opposite the name of the Party of your Choice.
A Cross Mark in the Square Opposite the Name of any Candidate, Indicates a Vote for that Candidate.

FIRST COLUMN

To Vote a Straight Party Ticket,
Mark a Cross (X) in This
Column

REPUBLICAN	
DEMOCRATIC	
PROHIBITION	
SOCIALIST	
INDEPENDENT	
INDUSTRIALIST	
KEYSTONE	
WORKINGMEN'S LEAGUE	

Governor (Mark One)	
John E. Tamm	Republican Workingmen's League
Webster Grlin	Democratic
Madison F. Larkin	Prohibition
John W. Stuyvesant	Socialist
George Aston	Industrialist
William H. Berry	Keystone

Lieutenant Governor (Mark One)	
John M. Reynolds	Republican Workingmen's League
Thomas H. Greer	Democratic
Charles R. McCauley	Prohibition
Louis Cohen	Socialist
Wm. H. Thomas	Industrialist
D. Clarence Glibbosey	Keystone

Secretary of Internal Affairs (Mark One)	
Henry Hock	Republican Workingmen's League
James I. Bickelie	Democratic
Charles W. Huntington	Prohibition
Beaumont Sykes	Socialist
James Ertis	Industrialist
John J. Ousey	Keystone

Representative in Congress (Mark One)	
Charles E. Patton	Republican Prohibition
William C. Heide	Democratic
George W. Fox	Socialist

Senator in General Assembly (Mark One)	
Joseph Alexander	Republican
Samuel Cooper Stewart	Democratic
Samuel C. Watts	Prohibition
Daniel M. Colwell	Socialist
Frederic E. Goodfield	Independent

Representative in General Assembly (Mark One)	
J. Olyn Meyer	Republican Democratic
James Haworth	Prohibition

THE MODIFIED MASSACHUSETTS TYPE OF BALLOT USED IN PENNSYLVANIA.

long—and too broad. It is properly called a “blanket ballot”—sometimes four feet long and three feet broad,—containing variously from one hundred to eight hundred names. The voter cannot know so many candidates even by reputation, and it is impossible, therefore, for him to vote intelligently. He is thus made the victim and the tool of the boss, of the expert in politics who gives his time to nominating the candidates and fixing the “slates.” For this reason, largely, the people have come to vote by tickets, by labels, by columns, rather than by men, giving themselves blindly to the guidance of politicians. The short ballot advocate says that the people must reduce the elective offices and concentrate their attention and interest upon a few well-known and responsible places and men, and let the minor offices be filled by a responsible appointive power, and that we can do this without departing from our democratic practice and principle. We already have the short ballot in national politics. We elect the President, the Vice-President, Senators, and Representatives, and stop at that, while leaving over 500,000 Federal office-holders under responsible appointment. No one complains of the lack of democracy nor insists upon the impossible popular election of this great mass of office-holders. The same principle should be brought into practice in State and local elections, especially in great cities. The reform requires: (1) that the number of officers to be elected at any one time should be limited, say, to five or less; (2) that the elective offices should be limited to those that are of such vital importance that the people will consent to interest and exert themselves in the choice.

The object of the honest citizen is to get good men in

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office, or the men who favor what he favors and can be relied upon to carry out their pledges. The voter can know and scrutinize one or two conspicuous officers like the President, the Governor, the Mayor, or even five councilmen in a city, and these can be made responsible for the administrative management of their respective powers through some form of commission government.¹

The corrupt practices are aimed at in the law, and perhaps all that statute law can do to prevent them has been done. It is a matter of enforcement.

Corrupt Practices Acts	Corrupt practices acts, imposing pains and penalties for the violation of fair elections and for preserving an honest ballot, exist in all the States. These generally provide that any person who shall, directly or indirectly, give or offer or promise to any one "any money, gift, advantage, preferment, entertainment ('treat') or any valuable thing whatever for the purpose of inducing or procuring him to vote for or against any person or measure at any election," shall be fined in a sum from \$300 to \$1000 or be imprisoned, or both, and shall be ineligible for any public office or employment for a period of years. Several States require all candidates to file on oath an itemized statement of their campaign expenses, and this is open to public inspection and may be published. The Federal
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¹ For further discussion of the Short Ballot see R. S. Child, *Proceedings of the Am. Pol. Sci. Assoc.*, vol. vii., 1909; also in C. L. Jones's *Readings on Parties and Elections*; "The Short Ballot," by Mr. Childs, in the *Outlook* for July 17, 1909; "The Short Ballot and the Commission Plan," in *Annals of the American Academy* for 1911; C. E. Merriam's *American Party System*, pp. 261-262. The Short Ballot League, 127 Duane Street, New York, has published and freely distributes some pamphlets on the subject, including "The Short Ballot," "Short Ballot Principles," and "Politics without Politicians."

corrupt practices act requires every Senator and Representative to give a full and sworn statement of his campaign expenses, including a statement of

“every promise or pledge made by him or by any one for him with his knowledge and consent, relative to the appointment, or recommendation for appointment, of any person to any position of trust, honor, or profit, in county, State, or nation, for the purpose of procuring the support of such person in his candidacy.”

All such promises are forbidden and in case of violation the candidate may be fined \$1000 and be imprisoned,¹ and either house may exclude him from membership on the ground of having obtained his election by fraudulent and lawless practices.

Among other things forbidden in corrupt practices acts, are betting by a candidate on an election, or furnishing money to others to do so; treating with cigars, tobacco, or liquor or in other ways; soliciting or begging money *from* a candidate, either for private use or for any charitable or religious organization; a candidate's paying another's poll taxes or naturalization fees, or lending him money, or going security on his note; and the laws in places require party committees to give an account of moneys received and disbursed through a party treasurer. The laws also seek to limit campaign expenses and to define what expenses are legitimate,—such as for printing, traveling, stationery, advertising, and disseminating information, postage, freight and express, telephone and telegraph, meetings, demonstrations, and conventions, the payment of

¹ It is clear that this forbids a Congressman's promise of postmaster-ships, or the promise of his influence toward securing any appointments for his supporters.

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speakers, clerks, typewriters, watchers, poll-takers, etc. In some States the candidate is limited to a certain per cent. of the first year's salary of the office for which he is running, and by the Federal law a Representative may not spend more than \$5000 to secure nomination and election, and a Senator is limited to \$10,000, exclusive of his living, travel, writing, printing, communicating, etc.¹

These laws indicate the strong public desire to provide every possible safeguard against the corruption of the ballot. In addition to the law a constant gospel is needed—the gospel of clean politics and an appeal to public sentiment from school, pulpit, and press. Men

¹ For further discussion of Campaign Finance, see Chapter XXI.
Immunity Laws:

The difficulty of detecting and punishing election bribery (vote-buying) is recognized. In most States the law imposes penalties upon both the bribe-giver and the bribe-taker. Their crime is one of darkness. It is committed in secret, without witnesses and without any record of the transaction that can be used in prosecution, and as both criminals are equally interested in being shielded neither will inform on the other. Immunity laws have been tried in several States by which one of the guilty persons is released from punishment if he will give evidence against the other. In some places the bribe-giver has been exempt while the bribe-taker has been imprisoned or disfranchised, but the bribers have not been very ready to come forward into court and before the community to acknowledge their conduct. In other places or at other times the bribe-taker has been offered immunity as well as a money reward if he would offer his testimony and convict a briber. But juries are slow to convict a respectable (?) citizen and send him to prison on the unsupported testimony of a single witness, and that, too, of a man who is admitting that he is of so low a character as to be willing to sell his vote. It seems unjust that either the bribe-giver or the bribe-taker should go free. Both are guilty, but if one can be convicted by the immunity of the other there is that much gain and some progress may thereby be made in stopping the evil. It would seem a nearer approach to justice to exempt the bribed, the vote-seller, since the briber is, as a rule, more rich and powerful, has less of temptation and pressure to resist and generally takes the initiative in the dirty deal.

should be made to feel disgrace and public odium who commit or condone corrupt election practices. The vote-buyer commits a wrong not only against the individual whom he corrupts but against every individual in the state. His rule is the rule of the wicked and under it the upright and the venal all suffer together. Every lover of his country, every friend and agency of good government, should be enlisted to restrain this most fatal of political evils. Public sentiment is the final saving force in a republic and it is vital that its citizens should remember that no law nor device nor election machinery can save the state from decay if its local communities are set in vicious ways and if there is no virtue among its people.

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CHAPTER XIX

RINGS AND BOSSES

MR. BRYCE has called attention to the conditions and influences in America which have produced a large political class, a class of men who give a large part of their time to party work and who make their living from this work, or from the offices **Professional Politicians** which they obtain through means of party service. He mentions the immense size of the country; the decentralization of our politics; the frequency of elections, all fought on party lines; the lack of a wealthy leisured class willing to give their time to party and public service; and he might have mentioned the great commercial opportunities and pecuniary rewards open to those who wish to wield political power for selfish ends. Elections in America are fought on party lines, from members of Congress to the constable in a township or to the clerk of a village. Consequently a great deal of party work is necessary.

“Lists of voters must be made, by a house to house canvass; new voters must be enrolled; bills and posters must be printed, meetings must be held, halls rented, runners and workers employed. One election is hardly over before another approaches, and the result is that this election work requires the employment of a large class of men. There

is a great deal of hard, dull election and political work to be done. Nobody is able or willing to do it in addition to his regular business or profession. What motive is there to lead men to do all this work of organizing and electioneering? What inducement has the public to offer men for doing this public party work? There must be some inducement or men will not do the work. 'What is everybody's business is nobody's business.'"¹

These conditions have produced a class of party managers called "politicians," who devote themselves to party service, sometimes from public spirit, but generally from love of intrigue and power, or from gainful motives.

A *politician* may be defined as one devoted to politics. Originally and rightfully, the politician is one versed or experienced in the science of government. In a Republic, all citizens should become poli-
The Politician and the Statesman
 ticians. The *true politician* is synonymous with *statesman*,—one who understands the principles and art of government, who gives thought and attention to public questions, one who is eminent for political ability, and who brings to public questions such foresight and wisdom and patriotism as will enable him to offer satisfactory solutions to these questions. Jefferson, Hamilton, Clay, Webster, Seward, and Lincoln, Chase, and Roosevelt were politicians in this sense. They were capable of guiding the nation in the solution of national problems. But at present the term *politician* has come to mean something quite different from this, and there generally attaches to the term, unfortunately, an element of reproach. A *politician* has come to mean one devoted not to the science and art

¹ Bryce, vol. ii., p. 58.

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of government, but to the success of a political party; a party worker who devotes himself to the art of making nominations and carrying elections; one who manages caucuses, committees, and conventions, by which the party business and the party machinery are carried on. It is because the people have consented to turn over their parties and their party government to this self-constituted class of party managers that they have come under the control of rings and bosses.

A Ring is a set, or combination, of men who stand by one another, under the direction of a leader, in carrying out their common political projects. They support one another for nominations and public places or for other political rewards.

Rings and Bosses
A number of public places are at stake within every community every few years, and these afford salaries, public patronage, contracts, and other pecuniary opportunities. Office-holders, or those who are frequently running for office, or the class of professional politicians who live by politics, are apt to form a ring to support one another, to pass the offices around among themselves, and to perpetuate their power. Men may work with a ring from love of politics or because they think the course pursued is the best for the public, and sometimes what is denounced as the work of a ring is nothing more than reasonable and natural coöperation for public ends. There is much public opposition to, and jealousy of, combines and rings, as the people like their political processes to be open and aboveboard, without wire-pulling and political chicanery. It happens for this reason that men are oftentimes disposed to denounce whatever they are opposed to as "ring politics" in order to bring their opponents into disrepute. While in this way injustice may be done to

some men who are constantly active in politics, yet the members of the professional ring are generally in politics for personal gain, and they are usually unscrupulous in their methods.

The leader of the ring is the *Boss*. A *Boss* in American politics is understood to be a professional politician who uses the machinery of a party for the advantage of a ring, or for private ends, and who is obeyed by a large body of followers. The Boss is the one who controls the professional forces. He cannot be said to be a political leader, though a political leader may sometimes descend to the functions of a Boss by controlling his followers, like sub-bosses or feudal underlings, by means of places and other indirect forms of bribery. A political *leader* is a statesman; he has opinions on public questions; he has political intelligence and a public purpose, and he seeks to instruct and direct public opinion on great public questions. The real leader is apt to be, though he is not always, a successful politician, one who resorts to the tactful art of political management, as Jefferson and Lincoln and most of the great popular leaders have done.¹ But the leader's purposes are public ones, and he appeals to the public reason for the support of opinions and policies, and his methods as a

The Boss is
Not a Political Leader

¹ Ex-Speaker Reed is reported to have said, with his usual wit and wisdom, "A statesman is a successful politician who is dead." It has been recently recognized that Mr. Roosevelt while President displayed the skill and ability of a masterful politician, while Mr. Taft did not. One of the functions of a statesman-politician is to know the people, to keep in touch with public opinion, and to know in what direction the public mind is tending. A *reformer* may defy public opinion or go far in advance of it, as may also a statesman *out of power*; but a ruler in power who would continue to guide the State must not turn back, nor must he go forward faster than the people are disposed to follow.

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politician are but means to an end. If these methods are corrupt the leader is disconnected from them; the actual working of and personal contact with such methods are taken over by others. The statesman who stands for the suffrages of the people will not be identified with, and he usually has no disposition toward, outright political corruption. If a leader is suspected of responsibility for corrupt methods he is injured with the people. The corrupt Boss, on the other hand, usually does not stand for popular election. If he seeks office it is by appointment or by indirect election—by legislature or city council, through men whom he controls. Usually, however, the Boss does not hold office, but controls the offices from the outside by back-stair influence, and without responsibility, though he occasionally decides to have himself elected to the United States Senate, or some other office of power and influence.

The Boss is not concerned with opinions. He controls men by their interests. His ring, or combination, is formed to carry out personal ends without any regard to the interest of the public. He cares nothing about the principles of his party; it is his business, and that of his henchmen and heelers—the workers who carry out his commands—to support the party, no matter for what policy it declares, unless this should endanger local boss control. It is the Boss's business to carry the election and thus to get power and places. At all hazards he must prevent the incoming of an honest administration that will apply the public offices for public uses; and to avoid this the party Boss will support the Boss of the opposite party against a reform movement giving promise of success. In such times of signal distress

Coöperation
of Opposing
Bosses

"there is no politics in politics" among Bosses. The Bosses of the opposing parties will come to an understanding and work together to save bossism and its perquisites. In 1901 the Democratic Boss in Philadelphia and his supporters, at the behest of the Republican Boss, put out a separate Democratic ticket, without the least hope of its success, in order to defeat the threatened success of an independent movement. The Democratic Boss and his "heelers" no doubt found suitable compensation from the public-tax tills. It is not the party rascals of the opposite party that the zealous party Boss wishes to turn out, unless he can turn his own rascals in. The city Boss of the corrupt type, pure and simple, considers his own interest first, then the interest of his kind, then of his party, and then (if ever) of the public. Those who support him have their reward,—the laborer gets his job; the placeman office; the policeman his promotion or his "divvy"¹; the contractor a chance at the public works; the banker the use of the public money; the gambler and the criminal immunity from prosecution; the honest merchant certain sidewalk privileges; the rich corporations lowered assessments and immunity from equitable taxation. All buy these special favors by support of the Boss's power and policy, and all enjoy the blessings of the Boss's government,—high taxation, maladministration, stolen franchises, robbery of the public treasury and criminal disorder in the community.

Is the Boss always a bad man? By no means, as the world judges men. He is generally a good fellow, hale

¹ City policemen are often allowed a share or dividend ("divvy") from the illegitimate collections levied under corrupt boss rule on gambling-places, "bootleggers," houses of ill-repute,—sums that are filched from these places for immunity from prosecution and arrest.

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and well-met, especially when seen at close range. He has many good qualities. He may be lacking in all sense of political integrity and may feel no responsibility for good government. But he at least displays that type of honor that is proverbial among brigands and bandits. A good Boss will often buy the venal, while he himself will not sell: he will keep his word and will seldom betray his own. His kind of a true man is one who will *stay* bought. He is generous and benevolent, helpful and sympathetic. He is energetic and active, and he lives close to and knows the people whom he controls, and he controls them because of this fact. He does not preach at long range. He does not criticize or condemn or attempt to reform. He sees things as they are, accepts them as a *modus operandi*, and works the conditions for what they may be worth for his purposes.

Miss Jane Addams, of Hull House, Chicago, tells "Why the Ward Boss Rules¹:"

"If the Boss's friend gets drunk he takes care of him; if he is evicted for rent, arrested for crime, loses wife or child, the Boss stands by him and helps him out. The Boss secures jobs and places, or makes them by city contracts, bails his constituents out of jail, says a good word to the police, uses his 'pull' with the magistrate if they are liable to be fined, or fixes up matters with the State's attorney. The alderman of the 19th ward, Chicago, had twenty-six hundred people on the public payroll; all were under obligations to the Boss. The Italian laborer wants a job and he will naturally vote

¹ See Miss Addams's remarkable article with the above title in the *Outlook* for April 2, 1898. I here condense the substance of a part of this article.

for the man who gets him one. The Boss gives presents at weddings and christenings; buys tickets wholesale for benefit entertainments; contributes to prizes for church bazaars, in ways that are apt to be known; provides a helping hand at funerals, furnishing carriages for the poor and a decent burial for the destitute when they are dead, keeping his account with the undertaker, and never allowing a county burial. All the friends and relatives and patrons of these occasions will become the friends of the Boss. The 19th ward alderman distributed six tons of turkeys, four or more tons of ducks and geese at Christmas, each handed out by himself with a 'Merry Christmas.' He is interested in the people."

The people cannot see or feel the demands of strict justice and morality. To waste precious time and energy and opportunity and money—to break an alabaster box of ointment,—in devotion and reverence to mere righteousness and justice and unselfish love,—this is sheer waste. The Boss does not waste his money in that way; he makes every opportunity count. He gives it to the poor. So it will be said of him: "He has a good heart; he is good to the widow and the fatherless; he does more for the poor man than the big guns who are always talking about civil service and reform."

Miss Addams continues, in substance:

"To ask where the money comes from which the Boss uses in this way would be sinister. He gets it from the rich, of course; and so long as he distributes it to the poor, what if he is the leader of the gang of 'gray wolves' in the city council selling franchises and betraying the most important interests of the city? What if he does make deals with franchise-seeking companies, and guarantees for boodle to steer dubious measures through the council? What if he is, in

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short, a successful boodler? This is the way political business is run and it is fortunate that a kind-hearted man so close to the people gets so large a share of the boodle. The people do not follow the moral logic to see that the money comes not from the rich companies or the pockets of its agents, but from higher taxes and lower wages, from the street-car fares of the laboring poor going to and from their work. They would rather pay two cents more each time they ride than give up the moral consciousness that they have a big, warm-hearted friend at court who will stand by them in every emergency. The sense of just dealing and public morality comes later in ethical development than the desire for protection and kindness. So the Boss rules because he is a good friend and neighbor.

“A reform league put up a candidate against a notoriously corrupt alderman. An attempt was made to rally the moral sentiment of the community for common honesty. Orators from the ‘better element’ came out from other parts of the city to speak. Suddenly it was announced from all sides that while the money and speakers for the reform candidate were coming from the *swells*, the money which was backing the corrupt candidate was also coming from a swell source: the President of a street-car company, for whom the boodler performed constant offices in the city council, was ready to back him to the extent of \$50,000; this magnate was a good (?) man and he sat in high places; he had recently given a large sum of money to a great educational institution, and had accordingly been appropriately honored on convocation day, and he was therefore as philanthropic, not to say as good and upright, as any man in town; our corrupt alderman, therefore, had the sanction of the highest authorities, and the reformers who were talking against corruption, the selling and buying of votes and franchises, were only cranks, and not the solid business men who had developed and built up the city.

“And thus we see by experience how all parts of the com-

Moral Responsibility for the Corrupt Boss

munity are bound together in ethical development. If the so-called more enlightened members of the community accept public gifts from the man who buys up the council, and the so-called less enlightened accept individual gifts from the man who sells out the council, we surely must take our punishment together."¹

This is a striking revelation from one of our political and social prophets and teachers of the power and processes of the Boss. Political immorality is at the root of the evil, and it is a political immorality for which responsibility lies not at the door of the poor, but at the door of the rich. We may condemn the poor man who sells his vote for a dollar or for a job; but what shall we say of the rich corporation of respectable men which is seeking further enrichment and more special privileges by these processes of public rape and plunder? No punishment can be too severe for the intelligent, the rich, and the powerful who commit such political crimes. We have no right to honor such men, or elect them to office, or yield to their will, while their public bribery and pollution are undermining the very foundations of morality. The rich boodler is the chief source of the Boss's power; and it is his purchase of franchises and legislatures and judicial decisions that is the most dangerous form of anarchy in America to-day.

Usually behind the Boss and the city ring will be found some rich corporation which wishes to obtain some special privilege or illicit gain, by controlling city boards, contracts, and franchises. This has been the bane of city politics in America, and the struggle against the alliance between the corrupt Boss and the corrupt corporation has uncovered and sometimes unhorsed

¹ Miss Jane Addams, *Outlook*, April 2, 1898.

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some notable bosses and rings,—as in Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Boston, San Francisco, Philadelphia, etc.

Every city in its election operations furnishes an illustration of a party machine,—the more or less perfect organization and coöperation of certain persons for the control of nominations and elections and for the consequent management of party and city affairs. Party machines operate over different areas,—within city, county, State, and national politics. Generally the organization and the machine are the same, except that “organization” is an approved term used to signify the party officials, servants, and workers who have for their purpose public party service, with some accountability to the party constituency, while the term “machine” is an invidious term applied to the organization to bring it into reproach or when it has become perverted to vicious or selfish ends. So “machines” may be good or bad, according to the end in view and the methods by which they work. Nearly all American cities have had the evil-working party machines, and some of them have produced notable bosses.

The most noted and perhaps the most perfect of these machines is Tammany Hall, the controlling Democratic organization for New York City. This organization had in its beginning a patriotic and benevolent purpose in view, and dates back prior to 1789, when a society was formed to unite in bonds of friendship “brethren of common attachment to the political rights of human nature and the liberties of the country.” “Tammany” was derived from Tamenund, the name of an Indian chief of the time of William Penn. The early society was largely social and was opposed to the richer and aristocratic

**City Ma-
chines and
Tammany
Hall**

classes of New York City. One avowed object was to "afford relief to widows and orphans" and others in need of charity. The society entered politics in support of Jefferson in 1800 and from that time on it became an important factor in city elections. It got a strong hold on the working classes of the city which was strengthened by the adoption of manhood suffrage in 1826. It was hospitable and helpful to Irish immigrants who came to the city in large numbers during the middle period of the 19th century. Gradually the society was turned into a purely political organization, co-extensive with the city, with a general controlling committee composed of delegates elected at ward primaries. This became known officially as the "Democratic-Republican" organization and was adjunct to the society of Tammany Hall. The leading members of this committee, and its sub-committees, were officers of the Tammany Society. This was as early as 1822. By 1839 Tammany controlled the politics of the city and elected the society's first Mayor. It had previously received the support that came from the use of party spoils in State and nation, and now the city offices and revenues were at its disposal. The city was growing by leaps and bounds and great opportunities arose for the astute leader and his immediate friends and adherents who might be attracted by the control of large public expenditures in contracts and improvements, and in the increase of public offices. In 1863, William M. Tweed became Grand Sachem of the Tammany Society and the chairman of the general city committee of Tammany Hall. He had served as a county supervisor with power to levy city taxes and spend public money in buildings and improvements. He extended his power over other branches of the city government, and perfected a

Tammany organization for the purpose of controlling the whole city administration. By 1869 the "Tweed ring" had control of the mayor's office, the city council, the district attorney's office, the county and city treasury, the street department, the comptroller's office, the city judgeships, and it reached out its control to the Speakership and Assembly at Albany and even to the Governorship of the State.¹

How the Tweed ring looted the city and how it was exposed is too long a story for these pages. It is an important chapter in the history of American politics. The city's debt was increased fivefold. A court-house that was to cost \$250,000 was made to cost \$8,000,000. Chairs were put in at \$470 each and safes at \$400,000. It was a riot of theft and plunder, Tweed enriching himself to the extent of \$6,000,000, before he was exposed. He was convicted and died in a felon's cell.

Generally, since Tweed's time, Tammany has stood for the control of politics for the sake of spoils. It is a machine that rests upon the control of municipal offices and privileges. Its governing body is the county general committee composed of a representative from each of the thirty-five assembly districts in New York County, that is from every district in the county that elects a member to the State Legislature. The apportionment allows one representative on the committee for every twenty-five Democratic votes in the district, which makes quite a democratic but an unwieldy committee of about 8000 members. This gives one official party worker for every twenty-five members of the party and adds materially to the party funds, as every member of the committee is assessed \$10 a year.

¹ Beard's *American Government and Politics*, p. 138.

But the actual management and business for so large a committee must fall to an *Executive Committee*, which is composed of thirty-five *District Leaders*, one for each of the assembly districts. These are elected by members of the general committee from the respective districts. One who wishes to be a District Leader sees to it that a suitable "slate" of committee members—his supporters—are elected from his district; his followers and supporters elected on his "slate" then name him as the District Leader. But every new member of the executive committee must be approved by the retiring committee, and if he is not so approved he may be set aside and another named in his place. This makes the real power in Tammany a centralized body and it is so close to being a self-perpetuating body that it is allowed to see to it that only the fit and the suitably elect survive.

Within the thirty-five legislative districts there are *precincts*, or election districts. The legislative district committee appoints a *District Captain* for each precinct, making over 1100 captains in all. Each captain has from ten to twenty-five lieutenants, and these captains and lieutenants are responsible for getting out the party vote, with pay for themselves and money at command for that purpose. Tammany headquarters in different parts of the city are open the year round, affording social clubs and centers, with constant opportunities for the district leaders and captains to do good turns and show favors to the voters.¹

¹ Recently a Tammany district leader gave a nice little savings bank, with a nickel as a start toward a savings account, to *every child in his district*. These leaders are like the people among whom they live; they are very human and are always doing good turns to the poor, or to any one else, as they can. They may be thought of as princes of political darkness, but it is evident that the children of light have much to learn from them.

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This body of district leaders, with their captains of tens and hundreds, controls the party and when the party is in power it controls the city. Reform movements come and go but the Tammany organization goes on forever. Its adherents control the funds, distribute the offices, decide on policies, and through their extensive and perfect organization they control, usually, the majority of delegates to the State convention and the State delegates to the National Convention. Party committee men and agents elsewhere are accommodating, if not subservient, for so large a support as Tammany can command at any one time at the call of its Big Chief is most important in the realization of personal and political ambitions. To fight Tammany in New York politics is to fight a tremendous power. Usually, in city, county, or even State conventions the word goes out to the reliable organization workers from the conclave of Tammany district leaders and the doings of the conventions are determined beforehand. That is, the conventions are "bossed" by the Tammany Sachem and his Tammany ring.¹

How is the power of the corrupt Boss to be destroyed?

Proposed Remedies for Boss Rule	Many remedies have been suggested, to which we can but briefly refer.
	I. Political education. This must be constant and untiring, and there must be a common standard of political ethics for all classes. All

¹ See Beard's *American Government and Politics*, pp. 661-663; Beard's *Readings*.

In the municipal election in November, 1913, by a Fusion of citizens of all parties, Tammany suffered the most disastrous reverse in its history, losing entirely the control of the city and all public patronage. This event, it was hoped, presaged the dawn of a better day for New York City, but within a short time Tammany was back in power.

classes must meet on common ground of justice and honorable dealing.

2. Nominate the delegates to our conventions, or our candidates for office, by means of a primary election. The Boss has his power because he can nominate to office or control legislation. It is claimed that if this power to nominate were brought within the power of all the people the Boss's power would be destroyed.¹

3. Civil Service Reform. As the power of the Boss is in the places and patronage he controls, it is claimed that genuine reform of the civil service, the substitution of business methods, or the merit system, for the spoils system, would destroy the Boss's power.²

4. Independent voting. It is claimed that if men would not be such slaves to their party, the Boss would be undermined. As it is, the Boss can confidently rely upon ninety per cent. of the voters of his party servilely following his program and voting the ticket that he has arranged. If men would but bolt for independent candidates, relief from boss rule might be obtained.³

5. Divorce municipal from national politics. City elections should not be held nor city business conducted on the basis of national issues nor in view of the interest of political parties. If city politics could be divorced from national politics, so that the voters would be encouraged to vote for the best men regardless of party affiliations, the Boss would be deprived of an element of power. But it is very difficult in local activities to disregard the interests and claims of national organizations.

6. The Short Ballot and commission government. The voter has to vote so blindly among so many candidates that he is placed at a great disadvantage. Let him choose only a few important officers whose merits

¹ See chap. xxiii.

² See p. 430 *sqq.*

³ See chap. xxv.

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he can know and let these procure good government through commissions.¹

7. Arouse a wider interest and activity, a larger participation in politics. This is a part of education and a very important part. Some of the greatest evils in our political life—the evils of bossism among them—come from political apathy, from neglect of their political duties by so many good citizens.

The Boss is denounced as selfish and venal because he goes into politics for personal gain. But it is no more selfish to go into politics for personal gain than to stay out for personal gain. The man who goes about his business, making money, and feathering his own nest, and thinking only of commercial gains, while he is content to leave “the dirty pool of politics” to the “unscrupulous and professional politicians,” is no more unselfish and patriotic than the man who goes into politics for what he can make out of it. Neither course is patriotic, but the chances are that the Boss is the more unselfish of the two. We do not need that more men should go into politics for private gain, but there is great need that more should go in for public ends. *How shall a larger proportion of citizens be induced to take an interest in politics from purely public motives?* This is the constant problem of the republic. Whatever tends to promote this larger disinterested participation in politics tends to produce good government and a higher public welfare. In a democracy politics are the concern of all citizens and they cannot neglect their civic duties with impunity. If they wish to preserve liberty and self-government and good government they must pay

**The Evil of
Political
Apathy**

¹ See pp. 404, 405.

the price for these things. The price is eternal vigilance and constant political watchfulness and activity. They must *care*, for "ten men who care are worth more than a hundred who do not care,"¹ and the political power will be wielded by those who care for it most. The apathy of citizens under a Republican government, seen in their failure to do their duty in the endeavor to place the Government in charge of men that are honest and true, is part and parcel of pernicious political life. It may be cheaper in dollars and cents, and personal pains, to let the Government be in the hands of the venal than to labor and suffer to keep it in the hands of the honest and upright. But it is just such ignorant and indifferent citizenship as will consent to leave venality unopposed that is responsible for bad politics and that leads to corrupt government.²

"When good men sit at home not knowing that there is anything to be done, nor caring to know; cultivating a feeling that politics are tiresome and dirty, and politicians vulgar bullies and bravoos; half persuaded that a republic is the contemptible rule of a mob, and secretly longing for splendid and vigorous despotism—then remember it is not a government mastered by ignorance, it is a government betrayed by intelligence; it is not the victory of the slums, it is the surrender of the schools; it is not that bad men are brave, but that good men are infidels and cowards."³

A writer who has struggled manfully against municipal corruption expresses the faith that when the people are led to see what benefits come to them from

¹ Bryce, vol. i., p. 262.

² See Coler's *Municipal Government*.

³ Geo. William Curtis, "The Public Duty of Educated Men," *Orations*, vol. i., p. 269.

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good government they will not willingly vote to put vicious and dishonest men in control. The "City Beautiful" with its good schools, public parks, improved streets, lower taxes, economy in the conduct of public business, an honorable enforcement of law and order, protection against injustice, and a fair chance in business,—these precious benefits are all sacrificed by indifference and apathy in politics. The benefits of good government should be made manifest to the people,¹ and its advocates and agents should try to rival the despised Boss in his knowledge of human nature, in his skill in handling men, in energy, resourcefulness, and tact, in genial personal magnetism and generosity,—in short, in all the manly elements that go to make up the successful man among men. In these qualities the Boss often excels, and though he may have a low standard of political morality he often lives a blameless and helpful private life. He cannot be beaten nor dislodged until the functions that he performs can be attended to by better men with better motives.

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CHAPTER XX

THE SPOILS SYSTEM

ONE of the great agencies in building up and maintaining a corrupt system of boss government and machine politics is the spoils system.

There are three divisions in the public service of the United States: the civil, the military, and the naval. By the civil service is meant that which is neither military nor naval, and it comprises all the offices by which the civil administration of government is carried on.¹ The struggle for civil-service reform has been an

¹ The civil service as used in politics does not strictly include legislative and judicial offices. The judicial office should be kept apart from party politics, but unfortunately even nominations of judges are sometimes made on the spoils basis, for party service rendered. The legislative officer is chosen out of consideration of public policies and he is, therefore, justly the subject of political and party contest. His claims to nomination for a place in the legislature, however, should not rest on his being a good "heeler" for a party boss or a good "campaigner" but upon his ideas, his public policies and purposes, and his capacity for service. Distinction should be made within the civil service between the *political* and the *non-political* offices. The *political* offices are those whose incumbents may exercise power in carrying out public policies which the people have declared for at the polls. The *non-political* offices—such as postmasters, policemen, bank examiners, clerks in the pension office, gaugers and weighers in custom-houses—are those that are subordinate and ministerial, whose incumbents can have no *policies*, except to render efficient service to citizens of all parties and without favor to any. In such an office, if a man be faithful and competent, it does not matter to the public whether he be a Democrat, Republican, Irishman, or

effort to substitute in the civil service what is known as the "merit system" for what is known as the "spoils system,"—that is, that merit instead of party service should be the basis of appointment to office and retention therein.

The *Spoils System* consists of the practice of using the public offices as party rewards. The system regards the public office first as a party per-
quisite, only secondarily as a public trust. **Definition of the Spoils System**
It involves:

1. Tenure at the pleasure of the appointing power.
2. The appointing power to be influenced primarily by party considerations,—the office to be bestowed from party motives, on a party man, as a reward for party service.
3. No man to retain office longer than his party holds power.

When a new party comes in the old-party rascals must be turned out. "To the victors belong the spoils," and the workers of the incoming party must have the offices as the rewards of victory. Senator Marcy of New York, when Mr. Clay charged the politicians of that State with corrupting methods, defended the New York system in these memorable words:

"When they [the New York politicians] are contending for victory, they avow the intention of enjoying the fruits of it. If they are defeated they expect to retire from office. If they are successful, they claim, as matter of right, the ad-

Baptist. It is claimed that the force appointed to enforce the Volstead act has been subject to scandalous corruption because appointments to this force are exempt from civil service rules and have been based on party service and spoils, and that efficient enforcement cannot be expected under such conditions. See William Dudley Foulke in *The Woman Citizen*, March 24, 1923.

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vantages of success. *They see nothing wrong in the rule that to the victors belong the spoils of the enemy.*"¹

The system came in partly as an attempt to apply the principle of "rotation in office." This principle was thought to be democratic, in opposition to an office-holding class. It was contended that "rotation" would give every man a chance, or, at least, more of the party adherents could be "taken care of," and that after a man had been in office a term or two, he should give way and let some one else have a turn. The new man might be inexperienced and ignorant of the duties of the office, but the principle of rotation and spoils goes upon the theory that one man is as good as another and "every man is good enough for any place he can get."

The Whigs denounced the spoils system when the Jacksonian Democrats introduced it, but when *they* came in they used it for party advantage as every party since Jackson's time has done. As the country grew in extent and population and the party organizations were perfected, necessary party work became more burdensome and extensive. Men had to be provided for this work and paid for it, and what seemed easier and more reasonable than to pay the workers from the public treasury by appointment to offices? So the idea arose that the loyal party worker should be given a berth, and that the office-holders should do the party work, be active in politics, see that proper nominations were made and that elections were carried, with the understanding that if their party were voted out all the subordinate government officers should go out, too, even to the messengers, porters, light-house keepers, coal heavers, and scrubbing women. All places were to

¹ Debate in U. S. Senate, 1832.

be used by the incoming party for its followers and henchmen. So the class of professional politicians arose who worked at politics for their bread and butter or gave all their time to getting men in office who would afford them grafting opportunities to make a good deal more than bread and butter.

This system applied to the civil service of cities and States before it was applied in national politics, and it still prevails wherever there is patronage to distribute unless public sentiment and the law intervene to prevent. In some States the penal and benevolent institutions, and in some cities the police and the schools, and the health and fire departments, have been prostituted to partisan ends and the positions in these public services have been used to reward party workers and to promote party success.

It is a system by which the party worker has the best chance of appointment, and *merit* is subordinated or disregarded.

**Evils of
the Spoils
System**

In discussing this subject we can do no more than to summarize some of the evils of the spoils system.

1. It tends to demoralize the public service.

Under the spoils system, when a party comes into power thousands of office-seekers pour into the national capital clamoring for office. They call for these offices, not because the offices are vacant, nor because they are not well filled, nor upon the ground that the applicants have any special fitness. The qualifications of the applicants are only a secondary consideration, even in the minds of the applicants themselves.

**1. Demor-
alization of
the Public
Service**

Their claims are based on some personal or party service,—the payment or collection of money for campaign

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purposes, the making of speeches, or other political work for some Senator or Representative or party committee. No matter how good a public servant a man may be, nor how well and faithfully he may have performed his duties, nor how inoffensive he may be as a partisan, if his party goes out he must go too, to make way for some party worker who wishes to get in. Old and well-tried public servants are put out; new and untried servants are brought in. When this happens in offices requiring expert knowledge, and when time and experience are required to learn the duties of the office, nothing can result but the demoralization of the service.

As the official's tenure of office depends upon party zeal and party service, and not on faithfully performing the duties of his office, the temptation is very great to neglect these duties for party work. As his appointment, in the first place, depended upon a political "pull," or influence, with some Senator or Representative, or political overlord, and his retention will depend upon the continued success of his party and his party superiors, his devotion will first be to his party chiefs, and his political work will naturally receive the larger part of his interest and attention. His official duties may be performed, but they are more likely to be neglected, especially if his party interests demand it. The spoils official is the servant of the party first, of the public afterwards.

The merit system reverses this. It applies the simple Jeffersonian test, "Is he honest? Is he capable? Is he faithful to the Constitution?"¹ If he is, he will be retained, and he will not need to run to Congressmen

¹ Later day Democrats brought in a test which Jefferson did not ask, "Is he a good Democrat?" Or, "What work has he done for the party?"

or political committeemen for "influence." If a new appointment or a promotion is to be made it is to be given to the man who is best fitted to discharge the duties of the position, and this fitness is to be ascertained as any sensible business man would ascertain it, by some fair, honest, impartial trial.

2. The spoils system tends toward the corruption of public morals. The people themselves are corrupted by it. The public might endure a deficient public service, but the people cannot endure the corruption which the spoils system brings with it into their political life. It tends directly to produce the professional class of politicians, and to sustain the corrupt power of the boss. The spoils motive in politics appeals to cupidity, avarice, selfishness, not to patriotism; consequently the selfish, the avaricious, the unscrupulous, will press forward and scramble for place, while those to whom higher motives appeal will tend to retire. It involves all the evils of government by patronage which made the age of Walpole so notable for corruption. "All these men have their price," said Walpole, as the members were filling the benches in the Commons. So the spoils system teaches that men are to be controlled in politics by bribes and patronage and places, and it cultivates appeals to such motives. It directly introduces patronage as a corrupting influence between the President and members of Congress. Senators offer votes for places and the President offers places for votes. One public servant pays another for the betrayal of a trust, and the people are taught to look upon this form of bribery as a legitimate practice.¹

2. The
Corruption
of Political
Morals

¹ See the Author's *The American Republic and Its Government*, p. 184 sqq.

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"So long as the offices were considered as public trusts, to be conferred on the honest, the faithful, and capable, for the common good, and not for the benefit or gain of the incumbent or his party, and so long as it was the practice of the Government to continue in office those who faithfully performed their duties, patronage was but a moderate influence either over the body of the community, or over the office-holders themselves; but when this practice was reversed—when offices instead of being considered as public trusts to be conferred on the deserving, were regarded as the spoils of victory to be bestowed as rewards for partisan service—it is easy to see that the certain, direct, and inevitable tendency of such a state of things is to convert the entire body of those in office into corrupt and supple instruments of power, and to raise up a host of hungry, greedy, and subservient partisans, ready for every service, however base and corrupt. Were a premium offered for the best means of extending to the utmost of the power of patronage; to destroy the love of country, and to substitute a spirit of subserviency and man-worship; to encourage vice and discourage virtue, no scheme more perfect could be devised."¹

In this early condemnation of the spoils system Mr. Calhoun shows a remarkable insight into the evils the system was destined to produce. The spoils idea invariably associates party service with office, party work with pay, party loyalty with official salaries. It holds up as the prize of victory, not the public welfare or a wise public policy, but several hundred thousand offices with millions in salaries. It appeals directly to love of money and place, and stimulates a fierce and selfish party spirit that will stop at no wrong to accomplish its end. It makes high minded party service and public-spirited candidacy for office

¹ Mr. Calhoun, speech and report on the Civil Service in 1835.

impossible. It levies contributions on the salaries of all the offices and expends vast sums in the corruption of the voters. It thus tends to lower the tone not only of our public men, but of the political life of the whole community.

3. The spoils system leads to a perversion of the party idea and is a source of party weakness.

3. Perver-
sion of the
True Concep-
tion of Party
and Party
Debility

It perverts the fundamental idea of a party. Instead of teaching that a party is a union of citizens for the sake of promoting political principles and policies on which they are agreed, it inculcates the idea that parties and party agencies are combinations of men for the purpose of getting the offices. "What are we here for, if it isn't for the offices?" said Flannagan of Texas in one of the great National Conventions. This is the typical spoilsman's idea of the purpose of a party. It is not only sordid, but it is debilitating. If it is only the offices the parties are striving for, why should the great body of citizens care which party wins? It matters very little to the voting mass of either party which set of party office-seekers is fed at the public crib. The more the idea is enforced on the people that it is the offices and salaries that men are striving for in party contests the more will politics be sordid and mean, and the more will the great body of voters refrain from party activity. The people will come to view our political contests only in the light of the street,—that "there is nothing in it" for them. And when the party chiefs come to distribute the spoils, there is sure to be disappointment. Ten applicants are disappointed to every one that is gratified. The "knife is up the sleeve" with those who have been given promises that cannot be realized. The Stalwart party braves go on the war-

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path. Personal feuds and factional strife arise and the harmony of the party is disturbed. The Congressman of the party out of power has not one half the trouble in keeping harmony in his district as have those who have the hateful task of distributing post-offices and revenue collectorships. If the offices are to be distributed by favor they inevitably become a source of weakness to the party.

✓ The management of politics by office-holders and office-seekers, as the spoils system requires, is distasteful to the people. It is sometimes said that the spoils of office are necessary to hold political parties together, to create an interest in public affairs, to get men to work for the party welfare, and to give life and spirit to our political contests. This is a libel. He slanders American patriotism and public spirit who says that it is necessary to hold out the allurements of spoils to inspire the citizens with an interest in public affairs. Such inducements may be necessary to bring into party service the men who have to be "seen," the political grafters and boodlers,—the men who buy votes and expect to recoup themselves in office from the public treasury. The spoils system does, indeed, bring these into party service, and the result is, as we have said, that better men are crowded out.

Thus, it is obvious that the three sources of party strength referred to in apologies for the spoils system by its friends are manifestly corrupting. (1) Assessment on office-holders, under fear of removal, of large sums of money for campaign expenses. (2) Party service by public officials, under the same penalty,—the performance of party work for which the public pays. (3) Promises of places to others as rewards of party work or party contribution. It were far better to prevent

these spoils motives that appeal so strongly to the venal and effectively repel the patriotic.

That the people would not neglect their parties if the spoils motive were removed is shown in the experience of England, where parties are well sustained, yet when one party is overthrown scarcely sixty offices change hands. In this country the most inspiring political contests have been carried on when the spoils were not an element in politics, by patriotic and self-sacrificing devotion. Our political history abundantly shows that the mercenary motive is not necessary to well-organized and well-disciplined parties.

The merit system, on the other hand, would elevate the motives and tone of party contests; it would bring into politics men of higher aspirations and nobler aims; it would eliminate much of the personal element in party strife, and it would relieve our public men of patronage-mongering and allow them to attend to the high duties for which they are elected. It would tend to suppress the boss and to develop the statesman.

4. The spoils system leads to the usurpation by members of Congress of the executive power of appointment, while it prevents the President and his Cabinet from giving due attention to public business.¹ It thus tends to the perversion of our constitutional system by blending executive and legislative powers.

4. Legislative Interference with Executive Functions Prevention of the Public Service

In a new administration the new Cabinet ministers who ought to have time and opportunity to study the needs of their respective departments and to give their attention to departmental problems, and who would naturally rely upon

¹ For the relation of this to "senatorial courtesy" see the author's *American Republic and Its Government*, p. 225 sq.

experienced subordinates, are pressed hard by applicants for places and the places of even these most reliable subordinates are demanded. The President himself can hardly find time for his important public duties.¹

The Constitution makes the President responsible for appointments. The spoils system virtually takes this power from him, while it at the same time deprives him of much time and strength needed for the great duties of his office. At the same time it reduces Senators and Representatives to the position of office-brokers who are compelled to give a large share of their time and strength to the distribution of offices in their districts. This is not the business of a legislator. He should be allowed to attend to the business of framing and promoting public policies. The Congressman's business is statesmanship; it is not merely getting pensions and places and public buildings for his district. The spoils system tends to prop up the little men who depend on a machine of office-holders to keep them in place. It restrains statesmanship by discouraging men whose political spirit and ability and conceptions of public measures would fit them for public life.

¹ It is reported that when one of President Lincoln's Illinois constituents expressed concern at the careworn face of the President during the troubles of the Civil War and expressed the hope that the burdens of the war would not break him down, Mr. Lincoln replied, "Judge, it isn't the rebellion that is killing me, it is your confounded Pepperton post-office." Senators and Representatives are greatly pestered by office-seekers and the system tends to reduce them to mere office-brokers, seeking to "work" the Executive Departments on the one hand and to satisfy applicants and claimants among their constituents on the other. It has been estimated that fully one third of the time of national legislators is taken up with the demands made upon them for appointments. They are expected to act as errand boys, or "do chores," for their constituents and to seek out some Government places or doles for their supporters and party workers.

5. The spoils system is undemocratic. Democracy rests on equal rights. It opposes privilege and favoritism. But the spoils system rests on privilege and favoritism,—the privilege of influential politicians to dispose of the public offices in favor of their party workers. The offices belong to all the people. They are not party property. All who are fit should have an equal chance to occupy these offices and all should have an equal chance to become fit. The spoils system does not encourage fitness and does not give an equal chance to all. Only a few can gain the favor and influence of the political boss. Influence wins as against merit. A young man who has rich and powerful friends may get a place if he is of the right party. The poor boy, unknown at court, has little chance. The “classified service” under the merit system, on the other hand, is made up of those who by some kind of test have proven their fitness for the duties to be performed. It may be, in the first place, by a competitive examination and then by a period of probation before final appointment. An appointee’s character is vouched for, but, in any case, his appointment does not depend on the personal influence that he can bring to bear, nor on his party activity, nor on his religious or political creed. All have the same chance, the sons of the poor with the sons of the rich, the protégé of a Senator with the young man who has nothing to offer but his merit. And when it is known that the officer’s security, and promotion, depend upon his merit and his efficiency and faithfulness, this inspires his work and encourages him to excel.

5. Democracy and the Merit System

The spoils system is destined to disappear. During the last twenty years it has been rapidly giving way to the merit system. It came in as an innovation and

a usurpation. Our fathers never imagined for a moment that it would come into our politics. Washington declared that in every nomination he had

Rise and Decline of the Spoils System “endeavored to make fitness of character his primary object.” In the first thirty-nine years of the history of the Government up to 1829, the six men who in this period occupied the

presidency made but 112 removals, and all for reasonable cause. None of these great men supposed that party service should be considered a reason for public appointment. The spoils system came into full operation with Jackson in 1829. The foundation for its introduction and triumph was undesignedly laid in 1789 by the decision of the First Congress that the sole power of removal was vested in the President,—a decision which placed almost every position of the civil service unconditionally at the President’s pleasure. Madison favored this decision. Fifty years later Webster opposed his opinion to that of Madison. In 1820 the Four-Year Law was passed under the influence of

The Four-Year Law, 1820 Secretary Crawford, of the Treasury Department. This law was another decisive triumph for the spoils system. Under it the terms of office were limited to four years. The act was passed, as Thomas H. Benton and John Quincy Adams testify, that Crawford might have the benefit of the office-holders’ influence in his race for the presidency. Under it the head of a department could retire men without the odium of dismissing them, by not reappointing them at the expiration of their terms. He could thus have the offices to bestow upon his favorites. “The decision of 1789, which gave the sole power of removal to the President, required positive executive action to effect removal; but this law of 1820 vacated

all the chief financial offices, with all the places dependent on them, during the term of every President, who, without an order of removal, could fill them all at his pleasure.”¹

The spoils system prevailed uninterruptedly, though not without protest, for more than thirty years. Agitation for reform began in 1867, led in Congress by Hon. Thomas A. Jenckes, a member from Rhode Island. George William Curtis became President of a Civil Service Commission under President Grant and he wrote a notable report on the subject in 1871, calling public attention forcibly to the need of reform. Congress was apathetic and indifferent and failed to make appropriations to sustain the Civil Service Commission, though Presidents Grant and Hayes both favored the reformed system, and Mr. Carl Schurz, Secretary of the Interior under President Hayes, made notable application of the reform in his department. Unseemly party quarrels in New York in 1881 between “Stalwarts” and “Half-Breeds” over patronage, and the assassination of President Garfield by a disappointed place-seeker, aroused public sentiment in favor of the reform, and in 1883 the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Bill was passed. This law provides for open competitive examinations for admission to the public service; for the appointment of a Civil Service Commission of three members, no more

**Beginning
of Civil
Service
Reform**

**The Pen-
dleton Act,
1883**

¹ George Wm. Curtis on “The Spoils System,” Sept. 8, 1881, *Orations*. In 1836 the four-year rule was made to include all postmasters whose salary was \$1,000 or more. This rule still applies to these and to many important officials, such as chiefs of bureaus, pension agents, Indian agents, governors and judges of territories, consular and diplomatic posts, and others to which the “classified service” has not been extended.

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than two of whom shall be of the same political party and for the apportionment of appointments according to the population of the States. Provision was made for a period of probation before permanent appointment should be made, and no recommendations from a Senator or member of Congress, except as to character or residence of the applicant, should be received or considered by any person making an appointment or examination. The law prohibits political assessments.

Since the Pendleton Act became a law, Civil Service Reform has steadily advanced under each successive Administration, though all the Presidents since that time have made removals and appointments on the spoils basis for which they have been criticized by the ardent friends of the reform. The classified service has been steadily extended, the reform has come into greater popular favor, and it is safe to say it will suffer no permanent defeat in the years to come, though President Harding showed a disposition toward "taking care of his friends" and putting into public places those who worked for his nomination and election. In the struggle against the spoils system the National Civil Service Reform League, under the presidency of George William Curtis and Carl Schurz, and later under William Dudley Foulke and Richard Henry Dana, has been a powerful factor in exposing and combating spoils politics. The people have come to realize that as no big business could be run save along the lines of the principles of Civil Service Reform, so too the Government, which is a pretty large business enterprise, needs the same common sense and business principle in its management. The merit system has made such progress that, while spoilsmen may still seek to prevent and defeat it, it will soon be permanently and

generally established as the system for public appointments.¹

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¹ Objection has been made to the system of competitive examinations as the basis of appointments on the ground that it tests men not in the practical matters required in office, but only on technical and literary matters. But such a test is applied only for the initial appointment; a period of service on probation must be undergone before a permanent appointment is made, while the power of removal for neglect, malfeasance, or for any good cause, continues to exist. Ex-President Roosevelt who as Police Commissioner in New York City and afterwards as U. S. Civil Service Commissioner, did much to advance the reform of the civil service, testified that the competitive examination as a means to an end while it did not always secure ideal results was better than any system of appointment for spoils purposes. "In most big governmental offices," he said, "it not only gave satisfactory results, but was the only system under which good results could be obtained." When Roosevelt was Police Commissioner two thousand policemen had to be appointed at one time. After "a rigid physical and moral pass examination" a written competitive examination "requiring only the knowledge that any good primary common school education would meet," was imposed. The answers returned to some of the questions gave an illuminating idea of the intelligence of those answering them. For instance, one of the questions was a request to name five of the New England States. One competitor, obviously from Old Erin, answered: "England, Ireland, Scotland, Whales, and Cork." Another gave the same answer except that he substituted Belfast for Cork! If the competitive examination does not require *too* much book knowledge it may be deemed not an unreasonable means of sifting out the applicants. See Roosevelt's "Chapters of a Possible Autobiography," *Outlook*, June 28, 1913, p. 466.

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CHAPTER XXI

THE PROBLEM OF PARTY FINANCE: CAMPAIGN FUNDS

THE spoils system in national, State, and city politics has called public attention to the evils growing out of party assessments.

Under party government the necessity of supporting the party must be recognized. To this end the party must have an organization,—a body of men acting together under some directing head, who, like the organs in the body, perform the functions expected of them. This is the machine,—the managing, working force of the party. No party can exist, no political work can be done, no cause can be promoted by, or within, a party without a machine. Without machine organization the democracy is helpless. If you want to nominate a good man for office, or get a good law passed, you must organize a machine; that is, the agents for getting the thing done must work together, and some men must be leaders to direct while others must be subordinates to obey. Political machinery is the means by which people act together in politics, under common direction for a common purpose.

Many people have come to think of the party machine as an evil in itself. It is not an evil, not even a necessary evil. It is a necessary benefit. But to

maintain the organization and to enable it to do for the party what is necessary, requires a great deal of money and a vast amount of hard party work.¹ In campaign times a number of men, many of whom must be men of large ability, capable of acting as the captains of the forces, as the managers and directors of an army of helpers, must give their entire time to the party work.

It is right that these men should be paid and paid well for their time and labor. It would be noble and unselfish for them to donate their time and their talents; and the men engaged in politics probably do this as much as any set of men give themselves to any cause. But the men of the party who go about their business, making and saving money, have no right to expect such a sacrifice. Patriotism does not demand it, for we are all equally interested in the party triumph, or in the good government, which, it is supposed, the party is working for.

It does not follow, however, that the party agents should be paid by their election to public offices. They should be paid out of the party treasury, not out of the public treasury. The disposition to nominate a man for office because of his party service is apt to lead to a disregard of the qualifications necessary for that office. Because a man has rendered a party service is no reason for electing him to any office for which he may be disposed to announce himself. He should be paid, when paid at all, by the citizens who believe in the party cause, not by those who oppose that cause. To take public money to reward a party service is an injustice to men of other parties;—it would be like taking public

¹ See p.

money to support a religious teacher or organizer.¹ It is a maxim with Americans that those who believe in a religious cause should pay for its support; men of another religion, or of no religion, should not be taxed to pay. Likewise, let those who believe in the party cause pay for its support, but men of the opposite party should not be taxed to pay. If in this respect we were as bad in our religion as we are in our politics it would be quite startling to the average American. But to tax Republicans—that is, to use the salary of an office—to reward a Democrat for party service, would be the same in principle. No one objects to party workers having pecuniary rewards; they should have pay in proportion to what their time and service may be worth, if they do not wish to contribute their time and service voluntarily. It is the source and methods of these rewards, not the rewards themselves, that are objectionable.

The usual sources of party revenue in the past are familiar:

Sources of
Party
Revenue

1. Public subscriptions among members of the party.

This is legitimate and public spirited, and it should be encouraged.

2. The party managers levy an assessment upon the office-holders belonging to the party, or upon the candidates seeking office through the party.

3. Private contributions of rich men and corpora-

¹ President Roosevelt in his message to Congress, December 3, 1907, proposed that the campaign expenses of both parties should be paid from the public treasury. This was offered as a means of escape from the evils of prevailing methods, but it made no provision for minor parties. Other citizens as well as Prohibitionists and Socialists would object to financing Republican and Democratic campaigns from public funds, and Mr. Roosevelt himself was later not disposed to advocate the plan. Other remedies for the abuses are being found.

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tions who are interested in securing the passage of special legislation through the success of the party.

4. The agents of the party in power secretly appropriate public funds,—of the city, county, or State. This is manifestly a corrupt source. It is a direct robbery of the public treasury and a palpable means of political bribery.

5. The outright sale of nominations, or of the offices themselves.

6. In the construction of public works—state-houses, schoolhouses, highways, etc., which are contracted for at extravagant prices, under agreement that the contractor divide a part of the corrupt gains with the party treasury. This is downright party graft and public loss.

The State Capitol building at Albany, New York, was made to cost \$25,000,000. Of course, there was nothing like value received by the State. A part of the "rake-off" went into the treasury of the party if it got by the pockets of the party managers and bosses who managed the contracts. There were similar party extravagances and graft in the State Capitol of Pennsylvania for the benefit of the Quay machine.

7. Party funds are also derived from affording protection, or immunity from prosecution, to "bootlegging," gambling places, and vicious resorts of all kinds. This is properly denounced as "the most despicable source of party revenue."¹ It involves a betrayal of trust and a hateful alliance with crime.

Some of these processes of raising party money are so palpably evil and offensive as to need no word of exposure or comment. They are universally condemned by public sentiment, although not uniformly

¹ Beard, 671.

punished by execution of public law. A great deal of the vast fund raised by these means is needed for legitimate party purposes—keeping open headquarters, printing, hall rent, advertising, salaries of the working campaign staff, bureau of speakers, shipping, traveling, telephoning, organizing clubs, rallies, bands, banners, badges, public meetings, and for the rank and file of the party workers, who give their time to the cause. Some of the fund is spent illegitimately, for purchasable votes, or it “sticks to the fingers” of the party agents who receive and are charged with the responsibility of distributing it.

**Kinds of
Campaign
Expenses**

Two of these processes of raising party money deserve special consideration.

The practice of levying assessments on office-holders and candidates has been common party usage. But it is accompanied with evils and abuses of serious proportions. The practice is sustained very largely, as we have said, from a false view of public office. The office is looked to as a party resource for party use. Underlying the party assessment is the idea, also, that the party office-holder and the candidate are the ones for whom the office exists and the election is held. “The candidates are seeking the office for their own profit; they are the ones who enjoy the fruits of victory; it is the candidates, if elected, who obtain the salaries and the emoluments of office; therefore from their pockets should come the funds necessary to enable the party managers to carry on the campaign.” This is a very common view and it has led to the party managers’ establishing an extensive and refined system of party assessments. The practice rests upon the

**Party As-
sessments
Based on
a Perverted
Idea of
Public Office**

idea that the officer is to have the benefit of a good place instead of the place having the benefit of a good officer. A doubtful candidate who will pay for the place is, therefore, preferred by the party managers to a better candidate who will earn his salary and refuse to pay for a place on the ticket.

The evils of the system are obvious.

Evils of Assessments 1. Offices are graded for what they are worth, and they are to be paid for by the candidates on the basis of the salaries expected. It is like putting up the offices for public sale, with a list price.

2. It promotes the candidacy of rich men. Only the man with a "barrel" can stand the growing assessments. On the other hand, poor men more capable and men of moderate means are excluded. The State or the community may be deprived of the service of its best men. In a typical State of the Middle West a man of political spirit and great ability, capable of high service, is constrained to refuse to become a candidate for Governor,—because he "cannot afford the necessary expense." He would have first to be assessed, say \$2500, by the State committee. He would have to meet the personal expenses of an extensive campaign, giving his time and using his own money, while "heelers" and "strikers" of high and low degree attack him for contributions on all sides. If he comes to election day on less than \$10,000 he may be considered fortunate. This is a stupendous public wrong, yet it is illustrative of a condition quite prevalent in our politics. It directly discourages the good and encourages the bad elements in our public life.

3. Thus, the system of assessments promotes the candidacy of the venal and corrupt. The corrupt

politician who submits to the extortion of party assessments does so with the fixed purpose of recovering the money by corrupt means or using his place for corrupt ends after he is elected. This is a part of the calculation of the corrupt candidate. There will be city jobbery, connivance with criminals, treasury defalcations, fraudulent franchises, for in some way the heavy assessments must be recovered. Mr. Bryce refers to the defense by a New York boss of the large salaries paid to aldermen on the ground that heavy demands were made on them by their parties. So, after all, the public treasury pays the election expenses of office-seekers. The system tends directly to political temptation and the ruin of character. The man who stays in politics and submits to these exactions suffers severely in moral tone unless he is a notable exception to the rest of mankind. On the other hand, the public-spirited, the conscientious, the upright, who object to corrupt methods, cannot afford to stand for public office. No practice tends more directly toward the debasement of our political morals and the degeneracy in the character of the public service. Assessments upon candidates should not only not be imposed, but they should be prohibited.

4. Assessments are directly and inevitably connected with electoral bribery and corruption. Usually the end in view in a party assessment is the party corruption fund. But for the well-known fact that such funds, or "pools," are always raised by these assessments, plenty of legitimate money would be forthcoming from the free and voluntary contributions of party members. Thus healthy party activity and support are restrained.

5. The system increases the expense of elections and thus encourages corruption.

6. The assessment funds are placed in irresponsible

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hands without account. This also encourages the unscrupulous and corrupt use of money. The assessments paid are often used by corrupt boodlers, not for party ends at all but for selfish ends. It is kept in their own pockets. No accounting can be demanded. The assessments are paid for corrupt purposes and complaints are estopped, though suits have been known by candidates to recover corruption money diverted by boodlers to their own use.

The abuse of assessments went so far that in many places a man was not allowed to become a candidate, his name was not allowed to go before the party convention, until he paid an assessment to help defray the convention expenses. So the people, instead of being allowed to choose their own officers, may only vote for those who, in a sense, consent to pay for their places.

In the face of the expensive campaigns which this system promotes a public candidacy means to most men either moral ruin or financial bankruptcy, or both. Very few men can withstand its temptations and its financial drain.

The evil prevails in rural as well as in city communities. From the high assessments candidates consent to pay it would seem that the salaries of the places are altogether too high since so much is paid to get the offices. The result of the system is usually to exclude from office men of first-class qualifications. The men who run are ready to pay for a chance to do something more than serve the public, and it is usually not claimed for them that they are especially qualified for the offices sought.¹

¹ It is related that when it was proposed in a certain county to make a man deputy auditor, objection was made that he was "not competent to be deputy auditor; he was not even competent to be auditor." The

It is not surprising, in the face of these woeful conditions, which we have by no means adequately portrayed, that it is increasingly difficult to induce good men to stand for the local public offices; that there are waste and extravagance in public administration; that the law cannot be enforced against criminals because officers of the law have themselves secured their election by criminal processes; that county officers resist a reduction of salaries and organize to oppose fair fee and salary laws; that "politics" prove the ruin of good men, and that good citizens become more and more disgusted with politics and turn to their private pursuits and leave the offices to the corruptionist and the spoilsman. It is very reasonably said that this practice of assessing and bleeding public candidates is "a festering sore that will taint the whole body politic, make elections a farce, and destroy the republic."¹

A Summary
of Assess-
ment Evils

Many remedies have been proposed for these evils. The Civil Service Law is designed to protect the office-holders.

"No office-holder shall solicit or receive assessments or contributions in any way whatever from other officers.

Proposed
Remedies

candidate for auditor must be a man who is popular with the voters and who is willing and able to spend enough money to be elected. A deputy who is required to be competent to take care of the office, can be appointed at a lower salary,—unless the auditor has bargained away the deputyship for the nomination or for support in the election.

For further consideration of this evil and the scale of assessments formerly prevailing in New York politics, the reader is referred to Bryce, *American Commonwealth*, vol. ii., pp. 121-123, 156-167.

¹ This description was written to describe conditions in American politics as they were twenty-five or thirty years ago. The practices described still hold, though there have been notable improvements in some sections and in some directions.

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"No officer shall solicit such assessments in any public building.

"No officer shall be jeopardized in his position by his contributing or refusing to contribute to campaign funds.

"No office-holder shall give to another office-holder any money, for any political object."

This law is to protect employees and to prevent office-holders from taking an unbecoming part in political solicitation.

To restrain corrupt practices in local politics it is proposed:

"1. That the party committeeman should be made a public officer and the party committee should be brought under public control. The purpose is to limit expenses to strictly legitimate purposes. The committee should be compelled to keep an account of all money expended and the purpose for which it is spent. This should be open to public inspection, together with the amount received and its source. Failure to keep such a record should be a misdemeanor.

"2. That there should be a limitation on the expenditures of candidates. Each candidate should be required to keep an itemized account of all money expended and the purposes for which expended,—this account to be open to public inspection by publication, or by being posted in a public place. No officer should receive a certificate of election until such an account is filed with the proper officer, and if it can be shown that he has violated the corrupt practices act, that should invalidate his election. Candidates and committees are to be put on oath as to their accounts."

In many States these provisions are incorporated in the law and are now in operation.

The second phase of party finance that calls for

special consideration is found in the contributions of corporations and wealthy interests to party funds. The custom has been that these contributions have been made for a consideration—for Government favors to be shown by the party and party chiefs in whose aid they are made. The men whose money put the party in shall decide what policies shall be pursued and what favors shall be bestowed. There are powerful railway interests, insurance interests, gas and electric companies, street railway interests, telegraph, express, and telephone interests,—all these, while in private hands and managed for private profit, are public service corporations whose business affects the public vitally every day. They must receive many privileges from the public, from cities and states. They must secure franchises, permits to tear up streets, and sometimes they seek exemption from fair taxes and immunity for poor service. “To secure special favors for which they ought to pay large sums to the public, these corporations too often find it cheaper to contribute handsomely to party organizations and to have the organization control the proper officials.”¹ That is, the “interests” bribe the party, and the party takes care of the “interests,” while the public suffers. This is what is called the “system,” representing the coalition between the “corrupt millionaire” and the “crooked Boss.”

The corporations buy their franchises and special privileges from corrupt party agents in control of State and city governments, by which they may collect money from the people in unfair charges. The Bosses and party managers collect party money from the corporations, since they can be “pinched” if they refuse to pay; and the “interests” receive their reward in further

¹ Beard, *Government and Politics*, p. 669.

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governmental favors and special privileges. Oftentimes the party leaders have made corporations pay heavily for permits and privileges to which they were fairly entitled. These found it easier to pay than to go to law, or more comfortable than to be exposed for what they had already done. So "strike bills," "pinch bills," or "hold-up bills," and "legislative blackmail" were resorted to as a means of forcing party revenue from the corporations, and these business concerns dared not make an honest fight in the open for their just rights.¹

This illicit connection between the corporations and the politicians operated, also, in the field of national politics. A brief recital of some political history will serve to make clear the nature of this abuse. It was well illustrated in the campaign of 1888. Mr. Cleveland's free-trade messages of the preceding years had alarmed certain industries that were fostered by the protective tariff. Mr. John Wanamaker, a merchant prince of Philadelphia, was induced to act as treasurer of the Republican National Committee and to undertake to raise a campaign fund. He had had experience in raising money from wealthy men for the Young Men's Christian Associations. In making appeals for party funds, it was his custom to address business men as follows: "How much would you pay for insurance upon

¹ Mr. H. H. Vreeland, a prominent financier in New York City, testified before a grand jury in 1908 that he had contributed five years before on behalf of a certain corporation, \$20,000 to Mr. Odell, chairman of the Republican State Committee, and \$16,500 to Mr. Murphy, the leader of the Tammany Democracy. His testimony showed how the Metropolitan Street Railway Company dealt with the New York politicians. The company needed to open certain streets. Permits were necessary, but these were denied until the proper officials were "seen" and then all impediments were removed and the company was allowed to lay its tracks. See an extract from this testimony in Beard, p. 670.

your business? If you were confronted with from one year to three years of general depression by a change in our revenue and protective measures affecting our manufactures, wages, and good times, what would you pay to be insured for a better year?" The appeal to material interests was effective and money was raised far beyond legitimate needs.

This was the campaign, too, in which Mr. M. S. Quay, the notorious Pennsylvania Boss, whose methods had brought Pennsylvania politics into such unsavory reputation, was chairman of the Republican National Committee. This "frying the fat" from the protected interests was a method of raising campaign money entirely approved by Quay. He thought the beneficiaries of his party's policies should pay for his party's success. He was square about it, and when he made a bargain for campaign money he proposed to see to it that the party and the public pay in return what was bargained for—in Government policies, Government appointments, Government money.¹

It was found that things were just the same when the Democrats came into power, and the "bi-partisan

¹ "Quay thought of politics only as a 'game' which he played with the conscience of a gambler. He would sacrifice a principle as a chess player a pawn. He believed that every man had his price and the only dishonesty in politics is to refuse to pay the price he had promised." *Outlook*, July 11, 1904. President Harrison, elected in 1888, did not accept this debasing conception of politics and he refused to carry out some pledges that Quay had made for his Administration. There was a breach between them and the latter was not displeased to see Harrison defeated for re-election in 1892. The way the "game of politics" was coming to be played under the boss regime was well illustrated in 1888 by the infamous circular sent out by W. W. Dudley for the Republican National Committee to party workers in Indiana instructing them to "divide the floaters into blocks of five and put a trusted man in charge of these five, with the necessary funds and make him responsible that none get away and that all vote our ticket."

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corruption" of "big business" was clearly brought into evidence. This was brought to light in the struggle in the United States Senate over the revision of the tariff in 1894, when Mr. Cleveland accused some of his party Senators (without naming them) of party "perfidy and dishonor." In that struggle the Sugar Trust was suspected of using influence in the United States Senate to prevent the tariff tax from being lifted from refined sugar. The Trust seemed to have some strings on certain Democratic United States Senators. Upon investigation Mr. H. O. Havemeyer, the President of the Trust, gave out some interesting information concerning the relation of his Trust to political parties and their campaign funds. Did the Trust contribute to both parties? "Yes," Mr. Havemeyer frankly admitted, "we always do that. In the State of New York where the Democratic majority is between 40,000 and 50,000 we throw our contribution their way. In the State of Massachusetts where the Republican party is dominant, they probably have the call. Wherever there is a dominant party, wherever the majority is very large, that is the party that gets the contribution, because that is the party which controls the local matters." By "local matters" he meant the election of Senators, Representatives in Congress, and the judges of the State courts. Mr. Havemeyer further asserted that the custom of dividing money between the two parties was "the practice of every corporation and firm, and Trust, or whatever you may call it." This was valuable political knowledge. Whichever party went in the Trusts did not stand to lose—if the money obligation were to be recognized.¹

¹ See Harry T. Peck's *Twenty Years of the Republic*, pp. 358-369; and Senate Report No. 606, 53d Congress. In recent years the literature

The campaign of 1896 and the years following even more forcibly and palpably illustrated this dangerous and debasing connection between the contributions of the rich and the control of the party and the policies of the government. In that year Mr. Hanna, Mr. McKinley's manager and chairman of the Republican Committee, seemed to lack confidence in the people's willingness to finance their own campaign in defense of their financial credit. He had to go to Wall Street for money. Mr. James J. Hill helped him by introducing him to certain rich men,¹ and the enormous campaign fund which Hanna raised was furnished by these men and the corporations throughout the country in which they were interested. The Life Insurance Companies and the banks were large contributors. "How the Banks filled Hanna's War Chest," has become a matter of history.²

of the Non-partisan League which has been circulated among farmers, calls attention to this non-partisan habit of the "vested interests," the "plunderbund" of the capitalist class. The notorious saying of Jay Gould is quoted, uttered in the days when he was manipulating the Erie railroad and bribing legislators and contributing to the campaign fund of both the old parties: "In a Democratic State, I am a Democrat; in a Republican State, I am a Republican; in a doubtful State, I am doubtful, but I am always for Erie." "Facts Kept from Farmers," p. 5, Handbook of the Non-partisan League.

¹ Croly's *Life of Hanna*.

² *The Banks in Politics*. In 1896 the National Banks and the National Bankers' Association were especially interested in the campaign on account of the financial issue. They entered actively into partisan politics. In March of that year the Association sent out a letter to all bankers urging them to use their influence with their customers against free silver coinage; and as a means of raising money for the Republican campaign, a committee of bankers sent out a circular letter in September to National Banks urging them to contribute to Mr. Hanna's War Chest. The bankers' circular letter, as issued in Pittsburg said: "The banks in New York and some other places have been contributing on the basis of one quarter of one per cent. of their combined capital and surplus, and

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Mr. Hanna's famous "second call" was issued late in October, 1896, to various industrial and financial corporations who were interested in "making the doubtful States secure." How the big Life Insurance Companies betrayed their patrons and diverted for partisan purposes funds that had been confided to them in sacred trust by men of all parties was later revealed by legislative investigations in New York. The way some of these funds were used to buy or to prevent legislation at State capitols became a public scandal, and the revelations brought reputable men to disgrace and one

the National Committee requests us to ask the Pittsburg Banks to do the same." "On this basis," it was stated in substance, "the share of your bank would be about \$450." Mr. Breen, a well-known journalist, then in Pittsburg, obtained a copy of this circular in 1896 and took it to the *Pittsburg Post* whose proprietor remarked that if it were published, "it would rock the boat," and he concluded not to take the risk of publishing it, though it was, indeed, an important and resounding piece of news. This Bank assessment was only the first installment of various levies upon the National Banks in the Hanna-McKinley campaign in the defense of the "national honor." It was estimated that \$200,000 was obtained from the Pittsburg banks alone by this "first call" and that more than \$2,000,000 was obtained from the banks of the country at large. In December, 1905, Senator Tillman of South Carolina offered a resolution in the United States Senate calling on the Comptroller of the currency to furnish to the Senate all available information concerning the contributions of National Banks to campaign committees. Senator Tillman found no great enthusiasm for an investigation among his Republican colleagues in the Senate. Senator Foraker admitted that banks had made contributions and he said that he thought they ought not to do so, except in "extraordinary and exceptional cases," such as that of 1896! There was no use, said Mr. Foraker, of any investigation to find out what was not denied. In March, 1906, the Committee on Privileges and Elections decided that it was inexpedient to embark upon an investigation of campaign contributions by the National Banks, but a sub-committee, consisting of Senators Bailey, Knox, and Foraker was appointed to draft such a bill as would prevent these campaign abuses. In 1907 such a bill was passed. See p. 411. See *Cong. Record*, vol. xl., Part VI., p. 5366.

of high financial standing to suicide.¹ These and other serious abuses in the campaign work of corporations have now become known and they are no longer excused on the ground of the existence of a "supreme emergency." It is not that the people have become any more sensitive in moral perceptions, but it is because they have *come to know*. The lid has been lifted; the light has been let in, and the people have been permitted to see some of the dark and underground processes by which legislation and political control have been obtained. The following remedies have now come into operation for these abuses.

1. Forbidding corporations to contribute. In 1907 Congress passed an act forbidding corporations to make contributions to campaign funds for Federal elections and forbidding National Banks to do so in any elections. Ten years before some States had passed such acts and a number of the States have since done so. These laws do not prevent individual members of corporations from contributing.

¹ The big Life Insurance companies in New York always kept political agents at Albany during the sessions of the State legislature, whose business it was to secure favorable legislation or to prevent unfavorable legislation. One of these agents one winter paid out over \$600,000 in "entertainment." Of course, he was paying members for their votes in low downright bribery. The companies were paying money to party bosses and party committees. The exposure of these insurance scandals and of the ways in which they were financing party campaigns and buying the laws brought humiliation and disgrace upon some so-called "prominent and respectable" men who had been "officers in the church" and "Sunday School superintendents." One of these (the president of the New York Life), as has been said, was driven to suicide and others into shame. The investigation of these scandals brought Mr. Charles E. Hughes into prominence as a lawyer and a public man, and his services as an investigator helped to make him Governor of New York. He afterwards became an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, the candidate of his party for the presidency and Secretary of State.

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2. Limiting campaign funds and campaign expenditures.

The amounts that may be paid out by candidates are limited to a certain percentage of the salary and fees attached to the office sought.¹ Contributions of certain kinds and from certain sources are prohibited altogether. Colorado provides that campaign expenses shall be paid by the State and by candidates; contributions by anyone else is made a felony. Some laws restrict the number of party workers at the polls who may be paid, and some attempt to define legitimate party expenses and forbid all others.

3. The publicity of campaign contributions. The *sources* of campaign funds should be known. Publicity laws are designed to make known to the public both the sources and the amount of the funds and the purposes for which they are expended. Campaign committees are, therefore, required to make sworn statements of these accounts. Nearly half of the States now have such laws. In 1910 Congress passed an act requiring publicity in Congressional elections, and in 1911 another act providing for full public statements of all campaign receipts and expenditures of all candidates for the Senate or House, in connection with both their nomination and election. These acts also cover the receipts and outlay in presidential campaigns. In 1908, before any national publicity act was passed, Mr. Bryan and his campaign committee voluntarily announced that their campaign contributions would be made known. They solicited dollar subscriptions and other small sums from the rank and file of their supporters and announced that no sum over \$10,000 would be received from any single individual, and that no

¹See pp. 407, 408.

Party Assessments for Campaign Funds 465

amount at all would be received from a corporation. Mr. Bryan insisted that such publicity should be conceded by both parties *before* the election. The people would then be able to see what persons and influences were furnishing the "sinews of war" for the respective parties. On October 13, 1908, the Democratic National Committee published a list of its contributions up to that time; and frequently thereafter, up to the election in November, the names of contributors and the amounts subscribed were published. The Republican Committee not wishing to forfeit public favor by being outdone in political virtue announced that it would conduct its campaign in harmony with the publicity laws of the State of New York,¹ an act which required stringent accounting, but that it would not make its campaign contributions public until *after* the election.² This action of the party committees was a recognition of an aroused public opinion and demand with reference to campaign contributions. In 1912, both parties made their public statements a short time before the election, and both statements showed that the campaign funds were growing smaller.³ The result of this publicity

¹ The State laws could not bind the operation of committees in the conduct of *national* elections.

² The Republican public statement when made showed many large contributions from wealthy men, like Mr. Andrew Carnegie, Mr. J. P. Morgan, and others, of from \$25,000 to \$50,000, and Mr. Chas. P. Taft, the brother of the presidential candidate, contributed \$110,000.

³ In 1912, the Republican statement showed a fund of \$904,828. Charles P. Taft gave \$110,000; a Mr. Leland, of New York, gave \$50,000; J. P. Morgan and Andrew Carnegie each \$25,000. There were many contributions of \$10,000. The Democratic statement showed receipts of \$1,159,446, from 89,854 donors, all but 1625 of whom gave less than \$100 each. Chas. R. Crane, of Chicago, was the heaviest giver, with \$40,000 to his credit, followed closely by C. H. Dodge, of New

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policy has been that "political debts" are not now so much incurred and recognized by party organizations as before. It is recognized that men are not free to use their money as they will in campaigns and that the public may with full propriety pass upon the motives of the givers to party funds. It would be absurd to contend that a man's paying to the party fund should disqualify him for holding office if his party succeeds to power. Rich men should not be barred from party

York, who gave \$35,000. The Progressive report showed receipts of \$676,672. Large sums were given by George W. Perkins (\$130,000), Frank A. Munsey (\$101,250), and Douglas Robinson (\$51,250). The balance was paid in small sums by party members.

In 1896, the Republican fund is generally reported to have amounted to over \$7,000,000. Mr. Herbert Croly, in his *Life of Hanna*, says this amount is twice too high as accounts amounting to only \$3,500,000 were audited. However, in view of the processes of that campaign, it is quite reasonable to conclude that as much again was not audited. It was a case of "all paid in and all paid out," without much accounting as to who got it and how it was used. The unhealthy size of this fund and its reckless use were important factors in producing the change of attitude in the public mind toward campaign contributions. It may be interesting to compare this excessive cost of campaigning with earlier elections. Professor F. A. Ogg has estimated the total cost of a presidential election to both parties in a recent election at \$15,000,000. Fully one third of this enormous sum he attributes to the presidential campaign proper, the rest to State and local contests. The election of Buchanan in 1856 cost the Democratic party committee about \$250,000, and the election of Lincoln in 1860, the first Republican President, cost the party about \$100,000. The time was when men worked for their parties without pay or the hope of it.

In 1920 Mr. Hays for the Republican committee announced that no contribution of over \$1,000 would be accepted. There was jealousy of "big business" and a marked tendency toward the financing of the party by its rank and file. The suspicion that big moneyed men who made big contributions to the party would expect to control the public policies of the party (as they had always more or less sought to do in the past) led public sentiment to be quite sensitive upon this point. The party managers were in touch with popular feeling and, therefore, announced this limitation on contributions. It cannot be known

and public service and their liberality should be encouraged. But appointment should be made for fitness, and to claim "recognition" or a reward by appointment, to some diplomatic post, or by special Government favors, for a man on account of his campaign contribution is not only absurd but vicious. Let the public know and it will judge fairly whether the rich gift to the party is, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion. In politics the rich and the poor should meet together with equal rights to the emoluments of power and with a just and common judgment for all. "Let there be light," as President Wilson has wisely insisted. The processes of politics have been too dark, too complicated. "Without knowledge the people perish." Publicity will add to their knowledge and it will help materially in the struggle "to substitute the popular will for the rule of guardians, a common council for private arrangement."¹

whether it was actually operated. It made necessary thousands more of contributors. It was always easier to get thousands of dollars from a few men (or corporations) than to get a few dollars each from thousands of men. The new rule made necessary the organizations in large cities and money centers of hundreds of committees whose chairmen were expected to report, or bring in, so many names and their contributions of \$500 or \$1,000. Some chairmen of large means may have paid for all instead of canvassing their lists of names. However, complete eligible lists of contributors were made and an unusually wide solicitation was promoted. One of the striking things brought out by this effort was that so many successful business men were so little interested in politics that their party and political affiliations were not known. Popular financing of the party has its difficulties but it has also pronounced advantages, one of which is the increasing sense of political responsibility which comes from helping or sharing in a political and party enterprise. If the few are going to see us through by doing all the paying they may as well relieve us by doing all the governing. And the many, if they pay, will be interested in preserving, or promoting, an economic system under which they will be able to obtain a fair proportion of the wealth of the country to enable them to pay.

¹ President Wilson's *New Freedom*.

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Wealth must recognize its public obligation and its public responsibility.

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CHAPTER XXII

THE GERRYMANDER

THE *Gerrymander* consists in laying out electoral districts in such a way as to give the political party conducting the operation an unfair advantage over its opponent. The party conducting a gerrymander for Congressional purposes seeks to group into a few districts the counties which give majorities for its opponents, and to distribute the counties having a majority of its own voters among as many districts as possible; that is, to throw "the greatest possible number of hostile voters into a district which is anyhow certain to be hostile, and to add to a district where parties are evenly divided a place in which the majority of friendly voters is sufficient to turn the scale."¹ The rule of the gerrymander is this: Make your own district majorities as small as is safe; make your opponents' district majorities as large and as few as possible; throw away as few of your own votes and as many of your opponents' as you can. If, for instance, a Congressional district is safely Democratic, the Republican gerrymanderer would throw as many Democratic counties into that district as possible, and have his opponents carry it by ten thousand or fifteen thousand majority. This would take Democratic counties away from several surrounding districts which

¹ Bryce.

might be thus made safely Republican. The purpose is to enable party voters to exercise political power out of proportion to their numbers.



THE GERRYMANDER

In Winsor's *Memorial History of Boston*, the creation of the term "Gerrymander" is credited to Benjamin Russell, editor of the *Centinel*. The painter, Gilbert Stuart, noting in Russell's office the outline design of the new Essex District, exclaimed: "That will do for a salamander!" "Better say Gerrymander!" growled Russell, and this term soon came into general use.

There are two legal requirements that act as impediments in the way of the gerrymander:

1. That the districts shall be composed of contiguous territory.

Legal Difficulties to
Gerrymandering

2. That they shall contain as nearly as practicable an equal number of inhabitants.

The first of these is provided for in most apportionment acts, both of Congress and the State legislatures. The second is provided for either in the written constitutions of the States, or in the apportionment acts of Congress, or by the understandings of the Constitution as required by the fundamental condition of republican government that the people should be represented in proportion to their numbers and that the majority may be enabled to express the popular and legislative will.

The gerrymanderer generally disregards these requirements. He makes the districts very unequal in number of inhabitants, and he evades the first requirement by distorting the boundaries of the districts and placing the counties out of their natural position. These are the odious features of the gerrymander, but they uniformly accompany the practice upon any considerable scale.

The political geography of a State of any considerable size would make seriously unjust gerrymandering very difficult, if not impossible, but for these illegal features.¹ When a State is to be gerrymandered which has, say, one hundred counties, unequal in population and many of them of close party majorities, the problem presented is of considerable difficulty. The party statistical manipulator and student of election tables who evolves from the returns and from the political geography of the State a combination acceptable to his party manifests a high order of genius. The problem requires a close,

¹ In New York in 1888 one district contained 107,000 population, another 312,000, made so for party purposes.

attentive study and a combining talent worthy of a better cause. The most skillful gerrymanderer cannot avoid running counter to the legal requirements referred to.¹

The gerrymander is clearly a species of intrigue and fraud. Its injustice was early described as such an arrangement of the districts "as virtually to disfranchise one portion of the community and to impart to the other an undue share of political influence."² The political inequity of the gerrymandering scheme may be illustrated by a few instances:

**The
Political
Injustice of
the Gerry-
mander**

In 1888 the Republican majority in Ohio was 20,500. In 1890 the Democrats carried the State legislature and redistricted so that the Republicans could get only seven out of twenty-one Congressmen. Later the Republicans redistricted so as to enable them to carry seventeen Congressmen out of twenty-one. A fair representative division of the Congressional representation might have been eleven to ten, or twelve to nine.

In 1890, in Indiana, the Republicans cast 216,000 votes; the Democrats cast 238,000 votes. The Republicans, under a Democratic gerrymander, elected *two* Congressmen, the Democrats *eleven*: that is, each Republican Congressman from the State stood for 108,000 votes, while for each Democratic Congressman

¹ If the gerrymanderer's work is unbearably iniquitous the managers of the opposite party may appeal to the courts. The courts will generally overthrow a redistricting act when the written constitution requires the districts to be of equal population as nearly as practicable. The court will not require mathematical equality, but only a reasonable approach to it. After one unfair gerrymander has been overthrown in the courts, the partisan legislature proceeds to enact another, perhaps not quite so bad. This might be overthrown, too, if the opposing party cared to go to the expense and trouble of testing it.

² *Olive Branch*, 1814, p. 413.

there were only 21,000 votes. Clearly a large body of the minority were disfranchised in the National House. It required five Republican votes to equal one Democratic. At the same time, the Democrats had so redistricted the State for legislative purposes that nothing short of a political upheaval would enable the Republicans to carry the legislature in order to undo the work.¹ "A leading politician of the State is said to have remarked that he had so fixed his State that his opponents could not carry the legislature without at least 150,000 popular majority."² Thus, as President Harrison says, "a minority rule is established that only a political convulsion can overthrow." In a county of a certain State to which were allotted three representatives to the legislature, instead of electing the three representatives on a common ticket for the whole county, the county was gerrymandered into districts; one district was made to consist of 65,000 population, one of 15,000, and one of 10,000. Presumably the small districts were made safe for the party, while the populous district was expected to elect an opposition member. In another county, detached, non-contiguous sections were united to make a legislative district.³

¹ The upheaval came in 1894.

² Lalor's *Cyclopedia of Political Science*, on "Gerrymandering."

³ See annual message of President Harrison, December, 1891, and A. J. Turner's *Science of Gerrymandering*. For other illustrations of inequalities in representation produced by the gerrymander, consult Commons's *Proportional Representation*.

As illustrations of the distorted districts, the reader's attention may be called to the "Shoe-string" district in Mississippi, 250 miles long and 30 miles broad, in which the negro vote was concentrated; or to the "Dumb-bell" district in Pennsylvania made up of two separated groups of counties and made "contiguous" by a single connecting county, made for the purpose of making an opposition district contiguous; or the

A notable evil of the gerrymander results from the fact that by its use a distinguished and useful leader in Congress may be gerrymandered out of a reelection when the opposition party comes into the control of his State legislature. Mr. Morrison, of Illinois, the Democratic House leader in the eighties, and Mr. McKinley, of Ohio, the Republican leader in the nineties, were left at home by use of such party tactics. In Great Britain this would be impossible, as a candidate for Parliament may "stand," or as we say "run," for any constituency that may choose to nominate and elect him.¹

"Concerning the origin of the gerrymander it is related that in 1788 the opponents of James Madison in Virginia attempted to defeat him for election to the first Congress under the Constitution by making a hostile district for him and providing that the Representative should be required to live in the district from which he was chosen. Patrick Henry led this movement in opposition to Madison, and it was mere fortune that the political device did not come to be known as 'Henrymandering.'"²

"In 1812 the trick was introduced into Massachusetts. The Jeffersonian Republicans had carried the legislature with Elbridge Gerry as Governor, and they redistricted the State in such a way that the shapes of the towns forming a

Missouri district which was made longer than the State itself, "if traced by its windings, into which as large a number as possible of the negro vote were thrown"; or to the "Saddle-bags" district in Illinois, and to the "Belt-line" district running around Cook County (Chicago) in that State. Formerly there was a "Staircase" district in Indiana.

¹ By the law of the Constitution a candidate for Congress is not required to live in the district for which he runs, but custom has so decreed it.

² See Tyler's *Life of Henry*, p. 313; Rives's *Madison*, vol. ii., pp. 635-655; Bancroft's *History of the Constitution*, vol. ii., p. 485.

single district in Essex County gave to the district a dragon-like contour. "This was indicated upon a map of Massachusetts which Benjamin Russell, an ardent Federalist and editor of the *Centinel*, hung up over the desk in his office. The celebrated painter, Gilbert Stuart, coming into the office one day and observing the uncouth figure, added with his pencil a head, wings, and claws, and exclaimed, "That will do for a salamander." "Better say a Gerrymander," answered Russell, and thus the word came into the language."¹

Several remedies for the evil of the gerrymander have been proposed.

President McKinley proposed that appeal be made to public sentiment and that this should demand that the districts should be impartially made and then be required to stand till a new census be taken. But it is doubtful whether public sentiment can be relied on to secure party fairness when party spirit runs high.

Remedies
for the
Gerry-
mander

President Harrison proposed a constitutional amendment forbidding the States to elect presidential electors under a gerrymander,² and it has been proposed to give to Congress the function of districting the States for

¹ Fiske, *Civil Government*, p. 217. *The Boston Gazette* of March 26, 1912, suggested in place of gerrymander the term "gerrymania." The last syllables would be expressive of the ferocity of the monster. It humorously declared that the word *Gerry* was closely related to the French and Spanish words for war; and therefore the complete word "gerrymania" would be expressive of ferocity and the rage for war which had seized the governor and his party. See Elmer C. Griffith's *The Rise and Development of the Gerrymander*, pp. 16, 17, and chapter v. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1907.

² While Harrison was President the Democrats carried the Michigan legislature, in 1890, which passed an act providing for the election of presidential electors by districts, an act which lasted for only one election, that of 1892. The act was constitutional but not according to custom. See *The American Republic*, p. 124.

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congressional purposes. A gross gerrymander in a State affects the whole country by giving the party that makes it an undue advantage, so all the States ought to have a voice in control of this. This would be a highly centralizing step and would merely substitute congressional gerrymandering for State gerrymandering.

The most prominent remedy proposed, and the one most seriously considered as being effective, is the election of Congressmen and other officers, where feasible, on a common ticket under proportional representation.

Proportional Representation is a plan to secure the representation of minorities. Its purpose is to defeat the gerrymander by giving to all considerable minorities representation in legislature or city council in direct proportion to their numbers. This is worked either by what is known as the "limited vote" or by the "cumulative vote." Under the limited vote, if there were thirteen Congressmen to be elected from a State, or thirteen aldermen from a city, these should be elected on a common ticket by the State, or city, at large. No voter is allowed to vote for more than, say, eight candidates. Each party may nominate a list of thirteen and seek to elect as many as it can; but the minority will be apt to nominate fewer candidates, and in any case they will elect, say, five out of the thirteen if their numbers and the law gives them this relative importance.

The "cumulative vote" also requires that several persons be elected on a common ticket. Each voter may cast as many votes as there are offices to be filled. He may cast all his votes for one person, or divide them among different persons, as he likes. This is done in Illinois in electing the members of the legislature. In a district

**Proportional
Representation.
The "Limited
Vote"**

**The "Cumulative
Vote"**

where three legislators are to be elected, the minority can always elect one by arranging that all their voters shall cast the three votes to which each voter is entitled for a single candidate. The majority voters may divide their three votes between two candidates. If they attempt to elect three they run the risk of electing only one. The plan for minority representation in Illinois is unsatisfactory and there is an effort among the best disposed citizens to abandon it. Under it "boodlers" and "jack pot" politicians can often be returned to the legislature by inducing their supporters to *plump* all their votes in their favor. In general the cumulative proportional plan involves: (1) Wiping out district lines to a large extent and allowing representatives to be elected from the city or State at large, or from larger areas. (2) Allowing a party, or group of voters, to nominate as many candidates as they wish, up to the full number to be elected. (3) Each voter to have as many votes as there are representatives to be elected, which he may distribute as he pleases among the candidates. He may throw all his votes to one candidate if he chooses. (4) The sum of all the voters registered as voting is divided by the number of representatives to be elected. The quotient is known as the *quota* of representation. (5) The vote of each party or group of voters is divided by this electoral quota and each party is allotted as many representatives as the times the quota is contained in its vote. Should there not be enough full quotas to elect the full number of representatives the rest are allotted to the parties having the largest major fractions of the quota. (6) The party's candidates declared elected will be those taken from its list in the order of the number of votes received. (7) If a vacancy should occur during a

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term of office it would be filled by a candidate of the same party, the one whose vote stood next highest on the list.

The objection to these plans is that they are too complicated and impracticable, and that the result would be to break up the solidarity of legislative bodies by introducing minority groups, thus promoting legislative deadlocks.¹

Advocates of the *Referendum* claim that their scheme would defeat the gerrymander by making it useless.²

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² See Chap. XXII.

CHAPTER XXIII

PRIMARY ELECTION REFORM

ONE of the growing causes in the interest of better politics has been the movement for primary election reform. This movement has tended to destroy the power of the machine and the boss. This reform provides for nominating party candidates in a primary election of the party voters instead of by a delegate convention. This throws the responsibility for party candidates on the whole body of the party and is an advance toward a larger democracy. The demand for the primary election has come from the feeling that the delegate convention has become corrupt; that the convention is manipulated by rings of professional politicians and office-holders; that "deals" are made and delegates are bought and sold; that a mere handful of men determine the action of the convention, and that the rank and file of the party, who cannot make politics their business and who will not indulge in dishonorable practices, cannot make their influence felt.

**Objections
to the Del-
egate Con-
vention**

The Primary, it is claimed, will give all an equal chance. We are governed by parties. It is only through parties that the people can rule. Whether we are to have good government or bad government

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depends upon how the party—especially the dominant party—is conducted. Therefore, the preliminary party meeting at which candidates are named, or delegates are appointed, or policies determined upon, is of vital concern in popular government. If the people can merely ratify or reject at the general election what this preliminary party meeting has determined upon, they

will exercise but little control; and if they leave the preliminary meetings of both parties to be managed by a handful of interested professionals, the people will find that the general election will present only a choice between two evils, and instead of having government of the people, for the people, and by the

If the People Are to Govern, they must Govern their Parties

people we shall have a government of, by, and for the bosses. If the people are to rule under party government, the party organization and its action must be brought under popular control; party government must be made truly representative in order that the majority may rule. The fundamental purpose of primary election reform is to secure this by taking party elections, preliminary to the general election, out of unregulated, irresponsible private management and by placing these elections under regulated State control, with provision against fraud, mistake, or neglect, where every man may count one, and no man more than one, where there will be equal chances for all and special chances for none. If the party is to be regarded as a kind of private corporation whose business is to be managed by a set of professionals; and if, in the private primary, or caucus, the boss is to appoint the chairman who is to name the committee to name the delegates; if party caucuses are called to meet in barns or some uncomfortable and disreputable places; and if the professiona

chairman makes decisions according to the "majority of noise," or appoints counters to retire to count the votes that have been deposited in a hat passed round in a promiscuous crowd; or if, after delegates are elected at precinct meetings, the convention, through its "credentials committee" in star chamber, always finds, or makes, a majority subservient to the boss,—then no matter how much honest men may strive in the party they will find striving in vain. They will quit politics as unprofitable business. They will retire from party meetings and the party will be given over more and more to the unscrupulous professionals. This is what has happened, to a large extent. It is in this way that independents are made, and the effective service of honest men is lost for party government. If party government is to be good government these men must be kept with the party to work with it and through it.

The purpose of primary election reform is to prevent these evils and to restore the government of the party to the masses of its voters. The reform involves allowing the people either to nominate good candidates directly, or allowing them a fair chance to elect delegates to a convention for that purpose, and to prevent the delegates after they are elected from being unseated in the convention. This is the substantial part of the reform.

**Essence of
the Reform
in Public
Control**

If all party officers and party candidates are to be named at primary elections, this, of course, will do away entirely with the delegate convention. This is the object of many primary election reformers. They think the convention is beyond repair. To this system of making nominations and to the successful working of

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a good primary election law the following features are considered essential:

1. The Primary Elections of all parties should be held together in every election precinct on the same day. The time and place of these elections should be fixed by law and not left to be determined by party committees. In this way the election day will be known, the polling places will be fixed and not precarious; machine gerrymandering and snap primaries will be prevented; the primary day will become well known, just as election day now is, and the people will become accustomed to it, and the voters of one party will be prevented from packing the Primary of the other for the purpose of nominating weak candidates for the opponents. By this plan the same election officials may conduct the Primaries of all parties and expense will be saved. The Primary Day should not be too long before the election, say from thirty to sixty days. Candidates should not be subjected to *too* long campaigns.

2. A good registration law. The party voters must be registered a certain number of days before the Primary. Careful registration always tends to promote fair elections.

3. The right to vote at a party Primary should be secured against fraud by the registration of the party affiliation or preference of all voters who seek to vote at the Primary. No opponent of a party has a right to participate in its Primary. The law should protect a party from its enemies who may seek to disrupt or weaken it. The test of party membership or party fealty is the most difficult matter in framing pri-

Essential
Features of
a Primary
Election
Law. 1. Co-
incident
Primaries

2. Registra-
tion

3. Party Pro-
tection, with
Reasonable
Recognition
of the Inde-
pendent
Voter

mary election laws. Experience shows that liberality in this direction should be encouraged. It is not necessary, nor is it generally desired by party managers, to shut out the independent element within a party. It is not necessary to apply hard party tests or a cast-iron pledge to support the nominees. Self-respecting men will not seek to vote in the Primary of a party to which they are not attached, and the unscrupulous will do so in the face of pledges, which they will unhesitatingly violate. The Primary should not be a means of pledging a man to abide by an unknown result. This would cultivate hypocrisy and lying, and only the unscrupulous will take such a pledge.¹

With the Primaries of all parties on the same day, the voters of each party will be led to give their attention to their own nominations. The primary system is not to destroy parties, but it implies that the party

¹ Formerly the party tests were determined by the party committees. They ruled out whom they would. Abuses led to legal regulations. The most frequent test is to require the voter to express his intention to support the party candidates at the ensuing election or to affirm his past or present affiliation or sympathy with the party. Some laws require the voter to state that he supported the majority of the party's candidates at the last election; others merely to answer affirmatively, "Are you a Democrat?" or Republican, as the case may be; others bar voters who have signed nomination papers, especially for candidates, in another party Primary. These party tests are generally applied at registration. The party managing officials are usually quite easy in admitting voters to party membership. They will not, as a rule, go behind the affirmation of the voter, unless they suspect a plan or conspiracy, of the opposition voters to break into a primary for hostile purposes. The legal tests requiring evidence and affidavits that involve some difficulties may be then applied. As a matter of fact many voters who are not members of the party, especially in the Northwest, vote in the party's primary and control its nominations. This is one of the forcible objections brought against the Primary by the regulars and workers of the party. The practice, they claim, tends to break down or weaken the party. Party obligations are no longer recognized.

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is not merely its managers, its machine, but the whole body of its voters. The independent voter should recognize that the registration of a voter's party affiliation, as the Kentucky law requires, is a desirable protection to the party organization. Very few would object to stating their party affiliation, if other information and pledges as to the voter's past and future are not exacted. If this seems to a voter to violate his independence he may either refrain from voting at the Primary, or other provision may be made for him.

4. The Australian secret-ballot system of voting should be used in the Primary as in the regular election day.

4. Use of the Australian Ballot

All the ordinary safeguards of the law should be placed around the primary election. All trickery and personal and party favoritism in choosing election judges and clerks should be reduced to a minimum. Ticket-peddling and electioneering at the polling-place should be prevented, and the use of corruption money should be checked.

Other minor features to be considered in primary election discussions are: (1) The application of the law should be made mandatory and not be left to the option of party committees. Primary elections should be under State control, not under party control. (2) The rotation of names in the printed ballots, each candidate having his name first on an equal number of the distributed ballots. Any name appearing first in all the ballots would have a manifest advantage. The unknowing and indifferent voters are apt to vote for the first on the list. In a poll of fifteen or twenty thousand votes the first place is probably worth one thousand

5. Mandatory Primaries and Rotations in Names in Candidates

votes to a candidate.¹ Fairness requires rotation. The Minnesota law provides for this. If the first who files his name with the party chairman is placed first on the ballot, the way is open to favoritism and fraud. An alphabetical arrangement, as some laws provide, gives an artificial advantage to certain candidates. (3) A certain number of names should be required on a nominating petition before a candidate's name should be allowed to go on the Primary ballot. This is to show that there is a reasonable demand for his candidacy. (4) As to the public cost of the Primary—the payment of election judges, renting polling places, printing and distributing ballots, etc.,—these expenses were formerly met by assessments upon the candidates, but now most States provide that they shall be paid from public funds. This expense is assumed by the public on the ground that the primary election is a matter of public concern and is not held in the interest of the candidates. "It would be much more reasonable to grant the candidate a sum of money for the purpose of conducting his campaign than to require from him a fee to defray primary expenses."² But some laws reasonably assess fees on all the candidates, of \$10 or more, to be named, collected, and used by public officials not by party committees. This is defensible as a means of providing for good faith on the part of the candidates and to prevent tricksters from overcrowding the ballot. (5) The problem of announcing the party platform arises in connection with the party Primary.

¹ In 1892 the Cleveland Elector whose name came first on the Electoral ticket in Ohio was elected while all the others were defeated. Several thousand Democratic voters *intended* to vote for the full list, but they voted only for the first name. It was the easiest thing to do and the Australian ballot was new.

² Merriam, *Primary Elections*, p. 142.

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In local communities the platform is not important, but if State or national conventions are done away with how shall the party set forth its principles? In Wisconsin the candidates of the party—for State offices and for the legislature—meet in convention and frame a platform. This commits them to a policy and the voters may decide, by defeating or electing these men, whether they wish to sustain such a policy. In Missouri the State central committee of the party and the candidates for Congress act with the other candidates (as in Wisconsin) to frame a platform. In Oregon each candidate in the Primary is required to announce his own platform in a statement not to exceed one hundred words. In Texas, if ten per cent. of the party voters petition to have it done, a question of party policy must be submitted to the voters at the Primary, and no convention shall pledge the party to any policy not endorsed by a majority of the voters.¹ The scheme of allowing the candidates to formulate the platform for State elections seems fair and reasonable, as they represent the faction of the party dominant in the Primaries or that would be dominant in a fairly representative convention; and they, too, are the ones who are to be responsible for carrying out the policies announced.

Under the primary system nominations will generally be made by a plurality vote. As the Primary may be held soon after registration day and as no one may vote at the general election who does not register, voting at the Primary will be greatly encouraged. Indiscriminate candidacy may be checked by requiring that a candidate's petition should contain five per cent. of the party vote at the last election before his name can go on the ticket at the Primary, and a reasonable public fee

¹ See Merriam's *Primary Elections*, pp. 150-153.

may be required of all candidates. No candidate's petition should be accepted within twelve days of the Primary, and sample ballots should be posted at least ten days before the election. The voters should have ample time to inquire as to the merits of the candidates. When registration and primary voting occur on the same day, the voter is asked, when he comes to register, if he wishes to vote at the Primary. If he says yes, he will be asked in which party Primary he wishes to participate, in order that a party ballot may be furnished him. If excessive independence or reticence prevents his stating his party affiliation, and he still desires to vote in the Primary, he may be given one of each of the tickets fastened together; he retires to the booth, marks the one he desires, presumably the one of his own party, folds them together and deposits them in the ballot-box. If he votes on more than one ticket, only that one is counted containing the largest number of offices voted for. If the same number of names is marked on each, both are thrown out, thus preventing the nomination of weak candidates by voters of the opposite party. The votes are then canvassed and returned by a responsible official board as prescribed by the general election law. The persons receiving the highest number of votes of their party become the candidates of that party for the offices for which they stood, and their names go upon the ballot at the regular election. This scheme encourages independent voters to take part in the Primary. But it might fail to keep out the unscrupulous invaders of a party.

"This will do away with the delegate convention. No ring, coterie, or clique can prevent a candidate from securing

Practical
Operation of
the Primary
Election

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the nomination, provided a majority of his party wish to vote for him. It encourages the candidacy of able men, too independent to truckle to the machine. It encourages the attendance of voters who under the present system think it useless to attend a caucus or a convention. As one must register in order to vote at the final election, if the primary be held on registration day primary voting will be encouraged.

"The machine may continue to recommend, but it can no longer dictate nominations. By placing the responsibility on each voter for the candidates put forward public spirit is awakened, and public spirit is vital to a democracy."¹

But it has by no means been conclusively shown that the primary election system should entirely displace the convention system, provided the latter can be properly guarded and regulated by public law. It is held that the essential benefits of primary election reform may be obtained and the benefits of the convention system retained at the same time,—that the convention system should be reformed not abandoned. It has been the abuses of the convention system that have led to the general public demand for primary election reform.

^{*} **Objections to the Primary Election System** If the convention can be made truly representative and directly responsible to the constituencies it is contended that it will afford a better system for making nominations. Several objections are urged to the system of making nominations by direct Primaries:

1. It tends to promote rather than to check electoral corruption. A primary election is merely another election, and as elections are now conducted we have enough of them. A Primary is merely another opportunity for the "floater" and the "grafter." A

¹ See the *Outlook*, May 1, 1897, and May 20, 1899.

large and corrupt use of money is encouraged. A boodle candidate, if he has money and is a good organizer and a "good fellow," has as good a chance for the nomination in a Primary as in a convention. It merely requires more money and more corruption. The machine can control the Primary as well as the convention. This is doubtless true of the unregulated, or ill-regulated Primary, those in which the party managers are in control, who are quite willing to bring the primary method into disfavor. There is solid foundation for the belief that *election* reform should precede *primary* election reform.

1. Electoral
Corruption
in Primaries

2. It promotes plurality nominations. A man may be nominated who represents but one third or one fourth of the party voters. A plurality nomination, which the primary system usually provides for, may be quite contrary to the party desire and prove very unsatisfactory to the public. Comparatively few votes, say 20,000 out of 100,000, may nominate, if there are enough candidates, and the machine man may be run in, if the reform votes are sufficiently divided.¹ Under the South Carolina system, if no candidate for Governor receives a majority of the votes cast in the party Primary, a second Primary is held to choose between the two leading candidates. But this process is expensive and requires trouble and time and the sustained attention of the voters, though in the South where the party is predominant it has worked fairly well. And, besides, the candidate third on the list at the first Primary might be preferred by a majority of the party as against either of the two leading candidates, after all minor candidates are out of the

2. Plurality
Nominations

¹ Michigan requires 40 per cent. to nominate for Governor and Lieut.-Governor, Iowa 35 per cent.

way. In a convention a majority is required for the nomination of a candidate, and a series of ballottings

may be had resulting in the average majority judgment of the party.

**3. Multi-
plicity of
Candidates**

3. It tends to a multiplicity of candidates and the consequent confusion of the voters.

The ring influence can easily cause a number of respectable candidates to be brought out, and thus divide the vote of the best citizens, while the ring or machine candidate may easily obtain a larger number of votes than any one of his opponents. The voter is confused by the great array of names placed before him. If he has to choose forty-five candidates out of a list of two hundred names the voter cannot choose intelligently. These objections may be obviated in the Primary by providing for the short ballot, which will do away with the multiplicity and confusion of names,¹ and by allowing *preferential* voting. The preferential ballot offers the voter an opportunity to register his second and third choices. If no candidate has a majority of first choices, then the second votes of the candidates are added to their first,—the lowest candidates, say those not receiving ten per cent. of the vote cast, being dropped from the list. If this does not produce a majority for any one, then the third choice votes are counted in. The objection to the preferential scheme is that it is complicated; but it generally serves to defeat a notoriously bad candidate, whose hope lies chiefly in divisions among the supporters of many other candidates. A second- or third-choice man may be a better candidate and a better officer than one of the “favorites who may have pushed their candidacies with more vigor.” The active workers of either numerous faction, though they may be selfishly contending for place,

¹ See p. 404.

will usually register a second choice in order to prevent the candidate of the rival faction from getting in.

4. The Primary system tends to weaken and destroy the party. It causes jealousies and divisions within the party and prevents efficient party organization. It offers no security for a geographical distribution of the candidates which is calculated to strengthen a party throughout a State. In districts where the party nomination is equivalent to an election, as in the Southern States and in some local districts in all the States, the Primary system is called for by the people; in such places it may be wisely used and may not injure the party. Even there, however, only the majority party can afford to use it. In these cases the Primary is the real election. But where there are close and regular party contests the Primary, it is claimed, tends to weaken and disrupt the party that applies it.

4. Loss of
Party
Strength

It might be said, in reply to this, that the Primary system would bring influences to the support of parties that would more than counteract its weakening effects. It would so reform parties and bring them to the performance of their proper functions that many men who are now detached from parties, being disgusted with party management, would come into closer party relations and activities. Extreme independents, who wish that still greater independence of party control should be cultivated, criticize the movement for primary election reform because, as it appears to the critics, to invest primary meetings with a legal character and to legalize the caucus would tend to abridge the freedom and independence of those who take part in them. It would bind men to support the party. Such a system of nominations would, no doubt, give less occasion or

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apology for independence and would, without destroying reasonable independence, bring to the party councils and support a large number of citizens who now act in more or less independent isolation.

Practical Operation of the Reformed Convention Those who propose to reform and not abandon the delegate convention propose, as an illustration, that after the precinct delegates are elected in fair, well-guarded Primaries, each township or county delegation to the convention should elect a chairman or foreman, and that this foreman, acting for the delegation,

“should hand in to the convention all the nominations desired by a plurality in his delegation, and the nominations thus filed by the different delegations the convention should post on a large bulletin board; and the convention should vote on such names, and no others, by a secret Australian ballot, under the care of officials named by public election commissioners.”¹

This proposes to bring the convention under fair public control and regulation. The advocates of the reformed convention system hold that the evils of democracy are not to be cured by more democracy; that it is not the application of pure, unrestricted democracy that we should strive for, but for the principles of the republic,—government by the people through their representatives; that any other system of party government is impracticable among millions of people over an extended area. The party should be a republican institution, and its nominations and con-

¹ See an article by Mr. Frederick Rush in the *Partisan* (Indianapolis) for July, 1902. Mr. Rush is the author of the first Illinois Primary Election Law of 1898.

trol should be conducted under republican forms. This points to the representative convention as the governing body in the party. It is not wise or necessary to cheapen the franchise and extend the influence of the ignorant and irresponsible voter, as the Primary system does. What we should do, say the advocates of the convention, is to safeguard the delegate system. Instead of asking the voter to vote for forty-five candidates out of a list of 132 names, let him vote for *one delegate*, and have an equal chance with the rest of the party voters in his precinct in choosing this delegate. Not one man in fifty can know the qualifications of the candidates, and probably ninety out of a hundred vote at random. It is no more logical to abolish the delegate party convention because it has been abused by designing politicians than it would be to abolish legislatures and congresses for the same reason. The delegate convention is controlled by designing schemers merely because of the indifference of the general body of the voters, and because of the ignorance and political corruption prevailing among so many party voters, and because the body of the voters feel that they have not a fair chance in the caucus. The remedy is to arouse public opinion and to bring the constitution of the convention—that is, the men who compose it and the rules under which it is to work—under proper public control. On this fundamental point the advocate of the reformed convention and of primary nominations are in agreement. Both propose to take the preliminary party meetings—the self-constituted caucuses that now name the delegates and dictate nominations—out of the hands of private and

Direct vs.
Indirect
Control:
Pure De-
mocracy vs.
Representa-
tive Gov-
ernment

unregulated party management and put them into the hands of public and regulated legal management. The advocates of the reformed convention accept this principle, but they hold that it can be applied and the convention retained. One of these advocates thus sums up the principal points in a good convention law:

1. A practically permanent and autonomous precinct, the boundaries of which are not susceptible of alterations easily or frequently.

Proposed 2. One delegate to a precinct.
Provisions 3. All nominations in the convention to be
in a Good
Convention by printed ballot, each ballot bearing the
Law name of the delegate voting it, and to be given
 official record. This would make the delegate
 responsible to his constituents and to the public. A
 great deal of the evil in the convention system has come
 from the secret deals and the violation of pledges that
 have been indulged in by the delegates.

4. Penalties for bribery, corruption, and unfair manipulation. The tricks of the ring must be guarded against.

"All that is necessary is to elect one good delegate in each precinct, instead of voting for forty-five candidates. If you cannot elect one good man, an honest and public-spirited man, for your delegate, you are not capable of nominating a host of candidates for your party.

"There would be no ring if you chose the right kind of men for precinct committeemen. And there will always be more or less of ring rule until you take away from the professional politicians the control of the party organization. Party organizations are necessary under popular government, and the delegate convention is the best system for making party nominations, if it is properly conducted."

¹ Mr. Edward Insley in the *Partisan*, July 1902 (Indianapolis).

Proposals to extend the primary to the election of delegates to the national conventions, with instructions given by the preferential vote on presidential candidates, are now prominent in public discussions. Several States have already adopted the plan.¹ If this be generally adopted and the national conventions continue to meet, the change will likely be combined with a readjustment of party representation in order to make the conventions more truly representative.² It has been thought unlikely that the managers in a convention would defy the popular vote and set up a minority candidate. Experience has shown that that is not the road to political and party success, but rather the sure road to party dissolution and defeat. If party committeemen, as well as the delegates, are elected by the popular vote of the party, the danger of a convention's being so mismanaged and misdirected will be lessened if not entirely obviated. The people in the primaries will determine what shall be done in the convention, and this will be real democratic republicanism.

But it should always be remembered that no organization nor machinery nor party system can save the city or the state; that the merits of party government will always depend upon the character of the men that run the party rather than upon the party framework or machinery. No one has a right to expect good government from bad men. Good citizenship is the first and constant necessity.

In the evolution of nominating systems we have had the following: (1) Nominations by private conference of leading citizens. (2) Nominations by a caucus of party leaders. (3) Nominations by free delegates in a

¹ See p. 307.

² See pp. 313-319.

convention. (4) Nominations by party bosses in control of the delegates. (5) Nominations by delegates elected by primaries, with the primaries regulated by the party machine under the control of party bosses. (6) Nominations by legally regulated and safe-guarded primaries.¹

Political evolution is now bringing the next proposal to the front. (7) Nominations by petition and direct election without the intervention of any party agency whatever.

The struggle has been for the popular control of the nominating machinery, for the control by the democratic masses as against the selfish and privileged few. Three means of nominating still survive, the convention, the primary, the petition. Progressive democrats contend that the convention has seen its day and is doomed; that while in the beginning it marked a democratic advance, its abuses are now too many and too serious to permit of its retention; that it is now but an instrument for trading and jobbery; it affords no real deliberation, as its decisions have already been made behind closed doors, and the party bosses and managers now desire to retain it only as a means of perpetuating their own power; so that the "boys" can come together in their periodical "pow-wows" and greet one another in their political "love feasts," while they are managing nominations and controlling the business of the party. So the people have been forcing the convention to give place to the primary.

But democratic champions and reformers, while recognizing in the primary an advance over the conven-

¹ See "The Failure of the Primary," by Joseph Dana Miller, in *The Forum* for July, 1913.

tion, are questioning whether it will be the permanent agency to take its place. They dislike forcing a voter to declare his party affiliation, thus permitting party ties to bind him more closely, and they claim the primary tends to perpetuate the power of the majority party, as voters will care little about participating in a minority party primary and will feel more or less bound in honor to support the results of the primary or sacrifice their self-respect. Thus *partyism* is more strongly emphasized and fortified and independent popular action sacrificed and prevented. These writers urge nominations by petition and direct election instead. They claim that this will break down the undue influence of *party* and bring power closer to the people; that those in power will be more responsive to popular desires; that popular movements will be easier, and that a whole generation of agitation and education will not be needed to bring party leaders up to a desirable popular reform.¹

Nomination by petition and direct election involve nominating and electing without recognition of party relations, without the intervention of any party action or committee. If any body of voters, in legal number, sign a petition for a nomination, the name signed for must go on the ballot, and it goes on without party emblem, column, or indication, and that is the only way in which any names may go on. This would mean, largely, an abandonment of parties as a means of making nominations, and a return to the real and original Australian ballot, on which there was no provision for party signs, circles, or fixtures. It would make still more necessary the short ballot; for petition nominations, tending to increase the names proposed, could not

¹ Mr. Miller, in *The Forum*, just cited.

provide for as many offices as are now elective. This, it is held, would be desirable, for while the people are concerned in the choice of public policies and in deciding what laws shall be made, and while parties may be helpful in enabling them to choose between policies and laws, yet law enforcement and the carrying out of policies are non-partisan and may be attended to by reliable subordinates who are non-elective. This would lead to an extension of the merit system and the retirement from politics and political management of the army of office-holders who work at primaries and elections under penalty of dismissal if election results are adverse. These reforms should accompany or precede any good system of nominations, either by primary or petition. But nomination by petition is urged with special force for local and city elections where the contest is on issues on which the national parties are not at all divided and to which their claims and policies do not apply. In city elections, on questions relating to schools, to public health, to suppression of crime, to water supply, to regulation of public utilities, and similar questions, party issues and party agencies may well be disregarded and nomination by petition may be welcomed as a means to this end, to enable the people to act regardless of parties. It would still be possible for a party to hold a city convention, nominate its candidates, and place them upon the ballot by process of the petition. But the party emblem and party column would be lacking, and the nominees would gain only such support as would come from traditional party allegiance or from being known as the choice of party leaders.¹ But with voters who have independent leaders and who are concerned with local needs and

¹ Merriam, pp. 165-166.

well educated on local issues, the party nomination may prove an element of weakness rather than of strength.

As Professor Merriam says there is "no automatic device for securing smoothly running self-government while the people sleep," and "under any system the largest group of active and interested citizens will determine public policies and select the persons to administer them."¹

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¹ The party nominating machinery is still a subject of attack by the progressive bloc, whose members are demanding a nation-wide use of the primary. Senator Hiram Johnson, of California, denounces the present Republican nominating system as permitting "a combination of Southern States where there is no Republican party, with Northern States where there is no honest expression of opposition, enabling a Republican national convention to register the choice of a few instead of the will of the majority. This is an injustice to the rank and file which can only be corrected by giving to the members of the party the right to express their preference and then have that expression faithfully and honestly recorded."

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CHAPTER XXIV

THE INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM, AND RECALL: THE OREGON EXPERIMENT.

ONE advantage in a federal system of government as against a centralized state, which political writers generally recognize, is that the states, or local communities, may experiment in politics without affecting the whole political body. If the experiment works harm, it may be dropped without injury, except to the single small community that may have tried it. If it works well, it may be adopted by other states until it has extended its benefits to the nation at large. So the states are looked upon as "political experiment stations." Kansas and Maine try prohibition of the liquor traffic; Oklahoma tries the guarantee of bank deposits. Other States look on and wait; and later adopt, or continue to reject, the new plans as the wisdom of experience may determine. Of recent years Oregon has appeared to be the most interesting, if not the most instructive, of our "experiment stations." Through radical democratic leadership and influences Oregon has developed a political system which embraces the following features:

- I. The Australian ballot,—to assure honesty of elections.

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2. A Registration law,—to safeguard the privilege of the legal voter to participate in the government.

3. The Direct Primary,—to insure the popular selection of all candidates and to make the public officer responsible to the people and not to any political boss or special interest.

4. The Initiative and Referendum, by which the people may legislate directly, either to promote or to prevent legislation.

5. The Recall,—a means by which an officer who proves incapable or false to his pledges may be removed by political process instead of by a criminal trial through impeachment.

6. A Corrupt Practices Act,—to guard against election abuses.

7. The popular election of Senators.¹

¹ The 17th amendment, which became the law of the land in 1913, provides for this method of election and hereafter all the States will elect their U. S. Senators by popular vote,—and the States have now provided by legislative act the electoral machinery for doing so. But for several years before this change was made in the national Constitution Oregon had a unique provision for popular election of Senators. A State law provided for the nomination by the political parties of candidates for the Senate and the placing of the names of these candidates on the State ballot at a general election. At the same time candidates for the State legislature had the option of making one of two public statements, or pledges, either that they would, if elected to the legislature, vote for the candidate having the highest number of the popular votes for Senator regardless of party affiliations, or that they would act upon their own discretion in voting for a U. S. Senator, regardless of the popular vote. The consequence was with the common run of candidates who wished to be elected to the State legislature, that the first pledge was made, and in 1909 a legislature in Oregon which was strongly Republican elected a Democrat to the U. S. Senate because the people in their primary capacity had expressed a preference for him—an act without precedent in American political history. In this way the voters in Oregon could vote for a candidate of one party for U. S. Senator and candidates of another party for the State legislature, on

Some of these measures are by no means confined to Oregon.¹ In fact a number of them were operative in other States quite a while before Oregon adopted them. But for their combination into a general popular system, providing for more direct popular government as against delegated or representative government, Oregon may be given the credit, or discredit, as one may think.

The special features of this system of popular government to which we need to direct attention here are the Initiative, Referendum, and Recall.² Where these prevail they are provided for by the amendments to State constitutions or in the new constitutions of incoming States, as in the case of New Mexico and Arizona.

The Recall was adopted in Oregon in 1908.³ By this provision any public officer may be recalled, or removed, by the filing of a petition, as the first step, signed by 25 per cent. of the number of voters in his district in the preceding election.⁴ The petition must set forth the reasons for the recall and if the officer does not resign

State and local issues,—a possible discrimination which may be at times highly desirable and is now, happily, always available. An effort was made to induce Republican members of the legislature in Oregon to violate their pledges and to exercise the right which the written Constitution assigned to them of voting freely for their own party candidate for the Senate, but, it is to be said to their credit, not one of them did so. Public opinion was decisive. In several other States as well as in Oregon the legislatures were being reduced to mere agencies for ratifying a popular choice for Senators already expressed at the polls. That is, the legislatures were ceasing to be the real electing bodies for Senators as the Electoral College had long since ceased to be for President,—an illustration of the way custom and political usage, *i. e.*, the unwritten constitution—is constantly prevailing over the written Constitution.

¹ See pp. 426-439

² For the discussion of the other topics, see pp. 347-358

³ The vote for this amendment to the Oregon constitution stood 58,381 to 31,002 in opposition.

⁴ In some places where the recall is in operation this percentage is lower, in some places higher.

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within five days after the petition is filed a special election must be ordered, to be held within a specified time¹ to determine whether the people will recall the officer. On the ballot at the election the reasons for demanding the recall may be set forth in not more than two hundred words, and the justification of the officer's cause may be set forth in a like number of words. He retains his office until the result of the recall election is known. No petition can be circulated against any officer until he has held office six months.² In the special recall election, the expense of which is paid by the public, an opposition candidate, or more than one, is put up against the incumbent and the candidate receiving the highest vote is elected. That may be the old officer, as he may be a candidate to succeed himself, and in case he is again elected, a second recall petition cannot be filed against him unless the petitioners pay the entire expense of the first recall election.³ If the recall election goes against the incumbent he is removed and his successor fills out the unexpired term,—unless he, too, should be recalled.

The provision for the Recall is regarded as a precautionary measure,—its existence is said to obviate the necessity for its use. It is supposed that only at rare intervals will there be occasions for its exercise. It has been compared to the policeman's club, not good for frequent or promiscuous use but only for the possible emergency.

The Recall has gained strength in recent years from a

¹ Twenty days in Oregon; in other States a longer time is allowed for the recall campaign.

² In Oregon a petition may be filed against a member of the legislature after five days from the beginning of the first session after his election.

³ Bourne's *Popular vs. Delegated Government*.

feeling that elected officers often betray their trust. They make promises to get into office and violate these after they are in. To remove an officer by impeachment it would be necessary to have a long trial in court and convict him of some crime. The officer may easily keep within the law and still do a great deal of harm; or, at any rate, he may pursue a policy contrary to what the people desired or intended. If he has not been elected under false pretenses, he may have been induced, upon new policies that arise, to pursue a course contrary to the public interest. The advocates of the Recall contend that the public officer should be made to feel his constant and direct responsibility to the public and that he can never violate or disregard that responsibility with impunity. If he should, the sword of the Recall in the hands of a vigilant people may descend upon him and cut him off. Other forms of removal, as by a trial in court, or by the joint action of the two houses in a legislature, have not proved adequate to hold public prosecutors, mayors, and other officers to their accountability to the public. Private, or criminal, interests too often entice and control them.

The checks against too frequent recall elections are provided in the expense involved, and in the liability to prosecutions for libel if untrue and defamatory charges are made against an officer, not to mention the just disposition of the voters and their willingness to give a public officer a fair chance and a "square deal." The recall is intended to make the officer more responsive to the wishes of his constituents.

It is claimed by critics of the Recall that it may be made an instrument for personal and factional spite; that the official under recall is not given a fair chance, as he not only has to defend his own record but also

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to combat the push and popularity of the rival candidate; that his policy which is opposed may not have had time to work out its benefits; that continuity of service and policy may be broken up; that it tends to interfere with political initiative and efficiency, leading an officer to become neutral and colorless, cultivating the desire to do nothing to offend any one and therefore leading to his doing nothing at all.¹

The recall of judges has aroused more discussion and opposition than any other provision in the scheme.²

Recall of Judges
Objections to the Judicial Recall The following are some of the objections and arguments that have been raised to the recall of judges and judicial decisions³:

1. It is denounced as a quack remedy which flouts the wisdom of experience. Our fathers were wise; they handed down to us our permanent tenure for judges. Should we be so rash as to disregard their example? Hamilton, Madison, and Jay in the *Federalist* are all fully on record against such a dangerous innovation. So are Aristotle, Webster, and other political thinkers and scientists.

2. The Recall is repugnant to constitutional govern-

¹The popular officer is not always the most efficient one, and a man's currying public favor may lead to his failure in public duty. The ox knoweth its owner and the ass its master's crib, but the public does not always know its own best servants. The friends of the recall reply that if that be true it is a fault of the people for which the people suffer most grievously and that experiences with the recall will enable them to recognize and reward true merit, which they will not be able to do until they can quickly punish those who are untrue to their interests.

²For Mr. Roosevelt's suggestion for the recall of judicial decisions, see p. 191

³See Rome C. Brown's "The Judicial Recall a Fallacy Repugnant to Constitutional Government," *Senate Document*, 1912.

ment. The demand for it comes from demagogues who seek to excite discontent against our present institutions, who indulge in tirades against present conditions, who are opposed to the Constitution and all true and tried forms of constitutional government. They seek to cultivate in the multitude a sense of social and industrial injustice. The evils are not so many or so bad as the advocates of the recall represent.

3. The Recall would result in giving unrestrained and unlimited power to the people. That was not the object of the Constitution, and its framers. They intended to check and restrain the people. While our government is a democracy, it is a *constitutional* democracy whose very object is to place in the way of the sovereign people such limitations, checks, and balances as will insure wise and deliberate action on their part. It is not the *people* but the *law* that must be supreme. It is a dangerous fallacy to teach that the *people* should be allowed to have their way unchecked. That would be to place the individual voter upon a false pedestal and inculcate a false idea of his "sovereignty." Courts and other agencies are set up to prevent the unrestrained, unchecked, and unlimited will of the majority, whether expressed at the polls or otherwise.

4. The judicial recall would break down all the limitations of the constitution, all the safeguards guaranteed to the people against arbitrary power. These limitations and guarantees cannot be enjoyed or enforced except through an independent and courageous judiciary. This seems to assume that the courts are the bulwarks of the people's rights and liberties; that legislatures and executives stand ready to violate these if they may not be overruled by judicial process;

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and that the *few* must be saved by the courts from the disposition of the *many* to do injustice.

5. If evils or wrongs exist by the law's delay or injustice, the fault lies with the people themselves whose direct representatives refuse to enact proper remedial laws.

6. We may not expect a perfect government, one in which no wrongs and evils exist. Ours is the best that has ever been attained. "Why should we change our form of government?"¹ Clamors for the rights of the people should be met by loyal regard for the preservation of the Constitution. The Southern secessionists sought to overthrow it once; no one should ever do it again.

7. If the people wish to change their Constitution there is a way provided, by amendment, not too slow nor too cumbersome. Let the people apply to any wrong the proper remedy in this proper way. They will then have ample time for deliberation,—a safeguard against popular caprice, prejudice, and passion.

8. The recall of judges is denounced as opposed to our system of restraints by expressed limitations and because it would deny to the courts the supreme power of deciding on the constitutionality of laws and restraining legislatures and executives from violating the Constitution. This limitation can be enforced only through the judicial department of government. This objection is urged especially to the recall of judicial decisions. This power of the courts, the objectors assert, is not a usurpation but a beneficent power for the people's defense. The courts must retain the power of being supreme interpreter of the Constitution. The English

¹ See a pamphlet on this title by President Nicholas Murray Butler, of Columbia University.

system of denying this power to the courts is impossible for us.¹

9. It is asserted that the plan has not worked well in practice; that recall petitions are circulated by personal and party opponents; that, in the case of judges, dissatisfied litigants will try to have the judge removed; that names are gathered on the recall petition by irresponsible circulators who are paid a few cents a name; one faction may use the recall against another faction; an officer may be subjected to trial before the voters without a fair means of defense, for a dutiful act that may have aroused class prejudice. And thus, it is claimed, the independence of the judge is interfered with. He must play politics, keep in mind public opinion, satisfy the more influential litigants and instead of being guided by reason, conscience, and the law, he is made a puppet of the temporary public majority. All consistency in constitutional interpretation would be destroyed by allowing recall of decisions, as the Constitution would be amended or construed according to the popular whim.

The question of the recall is largely one of expediency. Experience will have to decide whether it works well or ill. But it will be seen from these objections that it is also largely a question of progressive democracy, as to whether or not the people may be entrusted with larger and increasing powers. As a rule those who distrust the democracy and wish to shackle it, who are afraid the people will injure themselves if they are given

¹ See *The American Republic and its Government*, pp. 332-337. On this large and important topic the student is referred to A. C. McLaughlin's *The Courts, the Constitution and Parties*, and C. A. Beard's "The Supreme Court and the Constitution," and the *Documents* of Beard and Shultz, and to certain authorities cited in the Select References.

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the chance, will be found among the objectors to the proposal; while the more positive and radical advocates of a pure democracy and increased popular power will be found among the advocates of the recall.

The *Initiative* and *Referendum* were adopted in Oregon by an amendment to the State constitution in 1902. These two measures generally go together, and they are designed as a check, or remedy, for the alleged evils and shortcomings of legislatures. They are meant as a means of substituting direct legislation by the people instead of indirect, *i. e.*, to substitute for republican representative government a purely democratic government. These reforms, or projects, have been prompted by the feeling that the legislatures are often recreant to their pledges; that they are not responsive to the will of the people; that instead of being representative they are misrepresentative; that they are too much controlled by powerful lobbies and corporate interests which, sometimes by corrupt methods, succeed in preventing legislation the people demand, and in promoting injurious and selfish measures to which the people are opposed. The *Initiative* is a process for obtaining legislation which the people desire, in spite of an unwilling legislature. The *Referendum* is a process of preventing legislation which a *misrepresentative* and recreant legislature would impose upon the people. By the *Initiative*, the people may initiate, or begin to bring a measure to pass which a legislature has refused or is unwilling to pass. If a certain per cent. of the voters petition to have a measure or policy submitted to the people for approval the legislature must provide for a vote upon it. *Imperative Mandate* is a term used to express the compulsion from which the legislature acts. The law is imperative and if the initiative petition fulfills

the requirement of the Constitution the measure must be put before the people, and if it carries in the election then the legislature must draft and pass the act. The actual legal drafting of the bill may be, of course, attended to by expert legal officers. The people merely consider the broad question upon its general merits, as for instance, "Will you have woman suffrage?" "Will you return to the convention system of making nominations?" "Shall city councils be allowed to vote away public franchises?" "Will you exercise the power to recall public officers?" "Will you vote liberal taxes for a State University and higher education?" "Will you maintain one efficient Normal School?"^{*} "Will you conserve the supply of edible fish (salmon) or allow its waste by conflicting commercial interests?" "Will you prohibit the liquor traffic?" or "Will you have local option?" "Will you try the single tax?" "Will you allow the public credit to be used to build and operate railroads?" Such are some of the concrete governmental questions which have been submitted in recent years to a direct vote of the people of Oregon. The people of that State have passed upon sixty-four such proposed laws in four general elections and it appears that they have definitely settled twenty-six of these in the public policy of the State. Representative citizens of Oregon, while personally differing on these measures, testify to their confidence in the people's capacity for direct legislation and to the general feeling that the people have proved more trustworthy than the legislatures.

By the *Referendum*, on a similar petition, a measure

^{*} The people of Oregon voted to do so while abolishing two other Normal Schools which the legislature had established, moved thereto, no doubt, by a combination of local political influences.

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which the legislature has passed may not become a law until it has been submitted to the people and been approved by them. The legislature itself may refer a measure to the people of its own accord but if it does not do so, then, upon a proper petition received by the Secretary of State within ninety days after the final adjournment of the legislature, the proposed measure *must be referred* to the electorate before final enactment.¹ In this way the people check legislation. Thus the people reserve to themselves both the power to propose laws for the legislature to formulate; and to enact, or reject, at the polls any measure proposed by their legislative body.

The advantages of this system of direct legislation, as urged by its advocates, may be briefly summarized:

1. It brings power directly to the people, who are more honestly disposed and more to be trusted to take care of their own affairs than their legislatures, which are frequently disposed to serve other masters.

2. It is an effective means of political education. It serves to arouse the people to an interest in politics and government, in ways they have never been aroused before. The petitions arouse public discussions. But in addition to this the State, as is done in Oregon, may print a public pamphlet containing a statement of the proposed measure in which the advocates and opponents of the proposal have a right to insert a brief argument at actual cost to them of paper and printing. A copy of this pamphlet is sent to every registered voter of the State not later than fifty-five days before the general election and twenty days before a special election.

¹ In Oregon eight per cent. of the legal voters, as shown by the last preceding general election, are required for an *initiative* petition while only five per cent are required for a *referendum* petition.

Public arguments and appeals are made for and against the measure in other ways. Schoolhouse meetings are held and serious editorial and club discussions are the usual practice before an election. The people are educated, the responsibility for their own interests is brought before them, and they are led to think of measures, principles, and policies rather than of men and the personal interests of candidates.

3. The people will deal fairly under this system. Corporations and large commercial interests are often held up in State legislatures by "pinch bills," "strike bills," and blackmailing proposals, that are often introduced and pushed for the purpose of extracting money from rich concerns which are pressed to pay to secure the withdrawal or defeat of these threatening bills. Under the Referendum there is no field for such operations. An honest straightforward appeal to the public need not be feared by any good cause.

In opposition to the Initiative and Referendum many objections are urged:

1. The people will be kept constantly considering and voting upon measures. Busy people and men of affairs cannot afford the time. Only professional politicians, agitators, and cranks can give the time that will be required for legislation by such machinery.

2. The people cannot vote intelligently if a great many questions are submitted at one election, and that, too, at a time when national politics come in to divert their attention and when the personal interests of candidates are at stake. In Oregon nineteen questions were submitted at one election, involving large questions of public policy. The people cannot be "educated" for so many questions at once. They will be confused and be unable to discriminate among so many varied

and conflicting arguments. The consequence will be that they will vote in large numbers in the affirmative regardless of the merits of the measure submitted.

3. This system of legislation is an abandonment of the representative republican form of government which the Constitution guarantees to every State. The Supreme Court has held this contention to be unsound so far as the law of the Constitution is concerned.¹

4. It disregards the traditional American principle of the separation of the powers of government and practically substitutes an unwritten for a written constitution by permitting the fundamental constitutional laws to be as easily changed as the statute law. The veto of the Executive is set aside, and if any law of the State can be so easily changed by a popular vote the function of the courts to nullify statutes as unconstitutional will be destroyed. The courts' function as the supreme interpreter of the Constitution will be gone. If the court should declare an act which had been passed by the people under the Initiative and Referendum, to be null and void because repugnant to a higher law of the Constitution, that "higher law" can be as easily referred and repealed. Thus the Constitution is too flexible and easily changed and we have, in fact, a democracy unrestrained by the limitations of a written constitution. This objection is regarded by democratic advocates of the Initiative and Referendum as one of the crowning advantages of the system. Herein is seen, again, the conflict between the advocates and opponents of a pure democracy.

5. It is charged that direct legislation by the people will lower the dignity and lessen the sense of responsibility in legislative bodies. The personnel of these

¹ Pacific States Telephone and Telegraph Co. vs. Oregon, Feb., 1912.

bodies in ability and character is already poor enough; it will become worse under the new system. What man of ability and self-respect, it is asked, will care to become a member of a body which is reduced to a mere registering instrument for decisions and responsibilities that are assumed elsewhere? Legislative duties will be merely clerical and perfunctory. In considering this objection it should be noted that it is not expected that the important function of legislating shall be taken from the legislature. The legislative power of the people will still be vested in a legislature. The Initiative and Referendum are merely an alternative and additional means for lawmaking. If the legislature refuses to enact laws which the people want, or if it proposes to impose laws which they do not want, in such cases only is this instrument of popular power to be invoked. It puts the legislature on its good behavior, as it were, and the very possession of this power by the people will make its use the less necessary and less frequent and may even tend to improve the behavior and character of legislative bodies.

6. Another objection is that the people will not take enough interest in the matters referred to them. They are more interested in men, less in measures. Moreover, many of the laws submitted are technical and abstruse, and beyond the intelligence and interest of the ordinary voter. The experience of trying to get the voters to adopt constitutional amendments at general elections serves to show that they will not take the trouble to vote on measures while excitement is high about parties and leaders.

7. The Referendum does not offer opportunity for amending a measure; no chance for criticism or for remedying defects that are pointed out, *i. e.*, for "whip-

ping the bill into shape." This may be done in the discussion of the legislature but the act before the people on referendum must be accepted or rejected as a whole.¹

The advocates of the Referendum contend that it is not inconsistent with the legislature's still performing the function of criticising, considering, and completing a piece of legislation, but that it may act as a committee of the people for this purpose.

8. It is urged that the Initiative and Referendum will be used for selfish and frivolous purposes. Any foolish or designing set of men can put the State to the trouble and expense of an election. "The trade of getting signatures develops." Canvassers can get signers to a petition for any purpose at five or ten cents a name, and direct legislation by the people becomes ridiculous.

Serious or repeated abuses in this direction have not been usual. Wherein they exist they are incidental and a sober and intelligent people are not likely to lend themselves to such processes for any length of time without a remedy.

The Initiative and Referendum, considered as one system, is not new to the world. In Switzerland, the land of its origin, it is an old and established institution. In America the Referendum has long been used in a number of forms,—in adopting constitutional amendments, in local option elections, in voting railroad subsidies and public improvements. It is growing with the growth of democracy. This system of direct legislation is obviously growing in public favor, yet in the light of

¹ On the other hand the legislative process involves the risk of the legislative "joker,"—a skillfully hidden provision which is inserted by some astute attorney for his clients, calculated to render the act useless for its purpose or which gives some unsuspected advantage to private interests.

the advantages and disadvantages that have been urged it must be said to be, in America, still in the experimental stage. Its development and trial are forcibly illustrating for Americans that the science of politics is the science of experience.

It is a curious fact in our political experience that while the initiative and referendum have been urged by the democratic radicals and hotly opposed by unsympathetic conservatives as the defenders of the constitution, yet since their adoption they have been used rather, more, by the conservatives than by the radicals. In Ohio those who were opposed to the legislative ratification of the prohibition amendment secured a popular referendum on the subject and the people of Ohio, on a popular vote, refused to ratify the amendment, though the Supreme Court of the United States afterwards held that a legislative ratification of an amendment to the U. S. Constitution could not be over-ruled by a popular vote in the State. In Massachusetts the Legislature passed an act for the concurrent enforcement of the Volstead act. By petition, under the operation of the referendum, the opponents of prohibition held up this act and had the measure referred to a popular vote, and upon this referendum in 1922 the liquor enforcement measure was defeated, as was also a proposal to provide a State censorship for movies. Now the conservatives under a plan offered in the Senate of the United States by Senator Wadsworth, of New York, are proposing to prevent too easy and too frequent amendments of the U. S. Constitution by requiring, after an amendment has received the necessary two thirds vote in both houses of Congress, that ratification in three fourths of the States shall be had, not by legislative action, but by a popular

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vote on a referendum. It would be next to impossible to get an amendment through in this way. The radicals may counter by a proposal to require only a majority vote in Congress and ratification in a majority of States as the amending process; or they may seek to resort to the convention method of amendment every twenty years, or so.

Thus it will be seen that the referendum can be used for conservative ends as well as for radical ends. "The referendum seems now to hold this status: So long as it works for us and our cause, it may be tolerated. So long as it helps the other side and promotes causes we detest, it is a dangerous assault on representative government." (*Springfield Republican*, 1922.)

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CHAPTER XXV

POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE AND PARTY LOYALTY

A PROBLEM that constantly confronts the intelligent voter is that of the conflict between his personal independence and his party obligation. To what extent is the citizen bound to subordinate himself in order to coöperate with a party?

The Citizen's Attitude toward Parties

There are a number of attitudes that a voter may assume toward parties involving varying degrees of independence.¹

1. He may abstain entirely from all political life and activity. He may look on the Constitution and the Government as godless and forsaken and refuse to vote or coöperate with any party, or in any way support the political institutions or organizations of the country. Garrison and his Abolition coadjutors did this. They would not vote, nor hold office, nor seek to put one of their advocates in office, and, of course, they would attach themselves to no political party. They lived and spoke entirely on a moral plane. One may pursue this course also from utter indifference to public affairs

1. Abstention from Political Life

¹ See an article by Dr. Washington Gladden, on "The Uses and Abuses of Party," the *Century Magazine*, vol. vi.

or from a feeling that politics are "too dirty and corrupt" to give hope for purification and redemption. This attitude is that of the extremist in moral reform, or in selfishness, or of the political pessimist who gives over to faithless despair. There are not many of this class.

2. The voter may consent to vote and to influence voting, but avow no party allegiance whatever. These are the pure independents who acknowledge no party obligations or ties of affection. They assume to act as judicial umpires between the parties, voting as readily

with one party as with another, as they think the interests of the country demand. They may be represented as impartial umpires in the game, giving the decision fairly at one time to one side, then to the other, but they are not a part of the game. This generally reduces one's participation to a choice between two courses pre-arranged by others, though the hope of receiving the weight of this element may influence the pre-arrangement. This class of voters is also relatively small.

3. On the other hand, the voter may be a blind or unscrupulous adherent of a party, supporting his party in every emergency no matter whom

it nominates or what policy it proposes. These are the unscrupulous managers, or the unthinking party pawns with which the managers play the game. It has been estimated that fully eighty-five or ninety

voters out of a hundred of the voting mass of a party may be absolutely relied upon by the party managers to follow the course marked out for them by the party convention or organization. Such men are governed in their voting by prejudices, tradition, and habit, not

by any real opinion.¹ That there are party managers and place-seekers and ignorant voters who with cunning purpose or Bourbon stupidity are always ready to follow the party, regardless of party consistency or party principles, is not a matter of surprise. It is more surprising and more to be deplored that so large a proportion of honest men among the party voters consent to become the dupes of the unscrupulous, and by following their traditions and prejudices rather than their intelligence and conscience, become the principal means by which knaves and rascals acquire political power

¹ It is related that in the early part of 1896 one of the Democratic Federal office-holders in one of the Western States made a labored speech in favor of maintaining the gold standard, that the party might be saved "from the silver heresy," and the country "from repudiation and national dishonor." After the National Convention of his party declared for the free and unlimited coinage of silver he again came to speak in the same town to advocate the cause of his party in the campaign. In answer to expressions of surprise that he proposed, under the circumstances, to speak in his party's defence, he said he had come "to answer the speech he had made a few months before." In the same year in Pennsylvania a Democratic congressional convention that had been called to meet *before* the National Convention had declared itself on the controverted issues, declared unequivocally for the gold standard, and denounced the "silver heresy"; it nominated a candidate who loyally accepted the platform declaration. *After* the National Convention of the party had declared for free silver coinage, the congressional convention was again called together, rescinded its former declaration, and nominated the same candidate, who conveniently and loyally changed his principles to accommodate himself to the new situation. Similar, if not such glaring, inconsistencies came to light within the Republican ranks in that eventful political year. It would seem to ordinary morality and intelligence that such an exhibition of party subserviency is an absurdity, or a species of rascality. Of course, a man may change his mind, but such leaders (?) would hardly be looked to as safe guides. These cases illustrate how little local political managers are governed by opinion (that is, their own opinion) and how little they are leaders of political thought. They are mere creatures of forces put into operation by men of independent thought and action.

for their own ends.¹ If we could imagine the whole body of our citizenship assuming this attitude toward party and thus resigning the right, or habit, of independent thinking, or independent action, we should have to reconcile ourselves to the inevitable decay of popular government by party. Party would degenerate into the ring, the clique, the faction, and party rule would be but the despotism of the boss.

4. But there is a large and growing element in our citizenship that does not assume any of these attitudes

toward parties. These believe in parties as a means of effecting political action. They identify themselves with a party and take part in party management, attend primaries and caucuses, help to conduct conventions and make platforms and nominations. As party men they recognize the usefulness of parties, and believing in their own principles they are willing to adopt the party means of reducing these principles to practice; but with the spirit of true independence they hold their political principles above party success or party interests, and they will follow their convictions and their sense of the public welfare against the temporary decisions of the party organization.

Voters of this kind have a proper conception of, and recognize the true office of party. The party managers

¹ The *Philadelphia Record* is authority for the statement that there are 75,000 voters in that city qualified under the law to vote with whom no argument can avail. "They would vote for an escaped convict if his name were on the Republican ticket and take the chances of Senator Penrose and Senator McNichol securing him a pardon in time to qualify for office." The same condition prevails in other cities. Such voters on both parties are to be checked off in the count before the campaign begins. They are the driftwood and dead weight to be carried by intelligent and conscientious citizens.

and hidebound partisans are disposed to look upon a party as a disciplined army, to be directed by a commander-in-chief and his staff, while the voters, like machines or unthinking soldiers, are to move at the word of command. This, of course, is a perversion of the idea of party.

Character
and Function
of
Party

A party is to represent the aggregate or composite opinion of its members. It exists for the purposes of its voters, not for the purposes of its managers. The party is not an end in itself; it has no claims apart from the claims of the cause that it represents. The party is a *means* to secure the common ends that its voters have in view. It is not merely an organization for the purpose of securing majorities, carrying elections, and getting the offices for the party workers. It may do these things as a means for working out the end for which it exists; but the party's constant and fundamental purpose is to stand for principles and to commit itself to policies in harmony with these principles. A party is not a mere club, with tests of membership apart from, or above, its principles. It cannot exact pledges to obey orders or to vote for all nominees that an obedient party machine may offer. No voter should think of a party apart from, or above, its principles, and a party without principles, or the courage of its principles, is a paradox, and it can claim no allegiance from any citizen.

Burke's classic definition of party gives us as definite and at the same time as flexible an idea of the general basic principle of the true party as we can anywhere find:

"A party is a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavors the national interest upon some principle on which they are all agreed."

With this conception of party, true independence can be made consistent with true party allegiance. It

Reasonable Independence is Consistent with Party Allegiance is urged in behalf of party loyalty that parties are necessary to popular government; that they are expensive to organize and maintain, and that they should not be weakened and disorganized for transient and trivial reasons; that the "united wis-

dom" of the party is a safer guide than the individual judgment of any man, since "everybody knows more than anybody"; that, though the party may be temporarily wrong, the loyal party man should think of it as the party of his fathers that has rendered the country great services in the past, and the plea is made that its strength should be conserved for the sake of greater services in the future; that if men desert the

Pleas for Party Loyalty party they weaken their influence for good government by weakening, or destroying, their influence with the party, thereby injuring their future usefulness; that men

should not expect to keep "running in and out of a party"; that they should belong to a party completely, with loyalty and devotion, and not merely with spasmodic loyalty, giving no certainty of reliance or support; that if men bolt to a minor party it is but to "vote in the air," or "to throw away your vote," or to give a half-vote to the enemy; and that to vote with the opposite party is, of course, "to turn the government over to its enemies." All that is bad in one party is urged by the advocates of the other as reasons against independent voting.

These are the usual party pleas, and many of them have weight. The natural party disposition of most men is to give them full force and effect. But sensible

party men who make these pleas do not themselves surrender the "divine right to bolt." They know the need of a reasonable measure of personal independence, and they recognize that throughout our party history such political independence has been a constant and powerful influence in determining the course of political events. The history of American parties is full of illustrations: Salmon P. Chase, Charles Sumner, George F. Hoar, George A. Boutwell, Henry Wilson, and others who as young men left their party for their cause in 1848; Lincoln, Seward, Trumbull, Colfax, and all who were in at the making of the Republican party in 1854 and 1856, and who, for their cause, were ready to see their old parties defeated and shattered; Horace Greeley, Charles Francis Adams, John M. Palmer, Whitelaw Reid, Murat Halstead, who, later in the history of the Republican party, sought to bring it to defeat in 1872; Martin Van Buren, Samuel J. Tilden, David Dudley Field, William Cullen Bryant, among Democrats in 1848; Breckinridge in 1860; Cleveland and Hill and Henry Watterson and others in 1896,—all these renowned leaders and party managers among both the great parties have at times asserted their independence of party authority and have sought to compass their party's defeat. If party men by withstanding party authority are likely to lose influence with their party or weight in its councils (which is not always the case), it by no means follows that they weaken their influence over the course of events, or receive a more unfavorable judgment from history.

History of
Party
Leadership
Illustrates
the Spirit of
Independence

No absolute rule for determining one's relation to party can be laid down. It is a part of the universal

conflict between freedom and authority, between individualism and social action. What one will do in such a matter will depend upon his circumstances; upon the merits of the situation; upon personal disposition; upon one's estimate of the value of the party; upon the intensity of one's interest, conviction, and purpose in reference to the public policies at issue.

It is obvious that men sometimes act independent of parties from good motives, sometimes from bad motives;

**The Rule
for Party
Authority
and Per-
sonal Inde-
pendence** sometimes from public interests, sometimes from personal and selfish interests; sometimes for a noble cause, sometimes for an ignoble cause. Recognizing party as a necessary or beneficial agency in popular government,

if it be asked *whether bolting is justifiable*, it must be answered that it *is not* if the bolting is prompted by reasons that are trivial, petty, spiteful, selfish, ignoble; but that it is justifiable if the reasons given are good and sufficient. Who is to judge the reasons that are given? Manifestly the only reply is that every man must answer for himself to his own individual conscience and judgment. There is no other tribunal to which he can appeal. He may seek guidance and wisdom from experience, history, revelation, from whatever source he will, but if he is an intelligent, self-directing agent his action must be his own, and he alone is responsible. And he must stand or fall before public sentiment and posterity—the Court Supreme to which he must be willing to submit his case—*by the reasons that he gives*. According to the judgment wherewith he judges shall he be judged.

It is certainly only reasonable independence for the voter to insist that party interest shall always be subordinated to the country's interest; that one should

never unreservedly pledge himself to an unknown result of party action; that the party's principles in the opinion of the voter be designed to promote the public welfare, and that the party should be faithful to its principles; and that when the party abandons its principles and fails to present faithful and fit candidates for offices, it is not only the privilege but it is the duty of all good citizens to withhold their votes. As Mr. W. J. Bryan, who is a loyal party man, has publicly said, no man should allow a party to commit him to a course which he deems dangerous or harmful to the interests of his country.

"Let it be known that you are interested in the success of the party. Asking nothing for yourself take a hand in shaping the party policy and making nominations, being guided by public interests rather than personal ones. If against your protests they make bad nominations, *bolt them* and return to the charge. Keep standing up for men and things that are honest and of good report."¹

"Party is always to be subordinated to patriotism. Perfect party discipline is the most dangerous weapon of party spirit, for it is the abdication of individual judgment. It is for you to help break this withering spell. It is for you to assert the independence and the dignity of the individual citizen, and to prove that the party was made for the voter and not the voter for the party. When you are angrily told that if you erect your personal whim against the regular party behest you make representative government impossible by refusing to accept its conditions, hold fast by your conscience and let the party go."²

The services of party to liberty and popular government should be recognized.³ But when national

¹ Washington Gladden, *Century Magazine*, vol. vi.

² George William Curtis, *Orations*.

³ See May's *Constitutional History of England*, vol. ii., chap. i.

interests are sacrificed or subordinated to personal interests parties degenerate into factions. As long as the party is bound together by a common attachment to principles and a supreme regard for the national welfare its existence is justified. When it becomes a machine for the dispensation of patronage it is a menace to the state.¹

Critics of democracy have imputed its failures and blunders and misgovernment in America, as seen especially in large cities, to the ignorant and the poor and to the evils of an unrestricted suffrage. The indictment is misplaced. Ignorance and poverty are but the prey, not the source, of political corruption. Its source is found farther up, in the commercialism of the rich and powerful classes, among the "respectable" and the "well-to-do," who look upon politics and the laws only as a means of private gain.² Usually in the rank and file of the common people we find the intelligence and patriotism that are the saving forces of the state. They will not fail to deliver their parties and their party government from the control of the selfish and the venal. To this end the great need in American politics to-day is that young men of high ideals and resolute purposes for good government should devote themselves to political activity, standing up stoutly and constantly for honest government, high ideals in politics, and that active participation in political life by which better government is brought to pass. This is a path to honor and to the highest service, and it may be a path to national fame. For our political

Commer-
cialism and
Corruption

¹ Bolingbroke on *Parties*.

² See "Commercialism and Corruption," Gustavus Myers, New York *Independent*, January 17, 1901.

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history shows that it is the men who have these high standards of integrity and ideals of public service whom the vicissitudes of politics and party struggles bring into leadership and into the highest honor and office in the gift of the people.

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